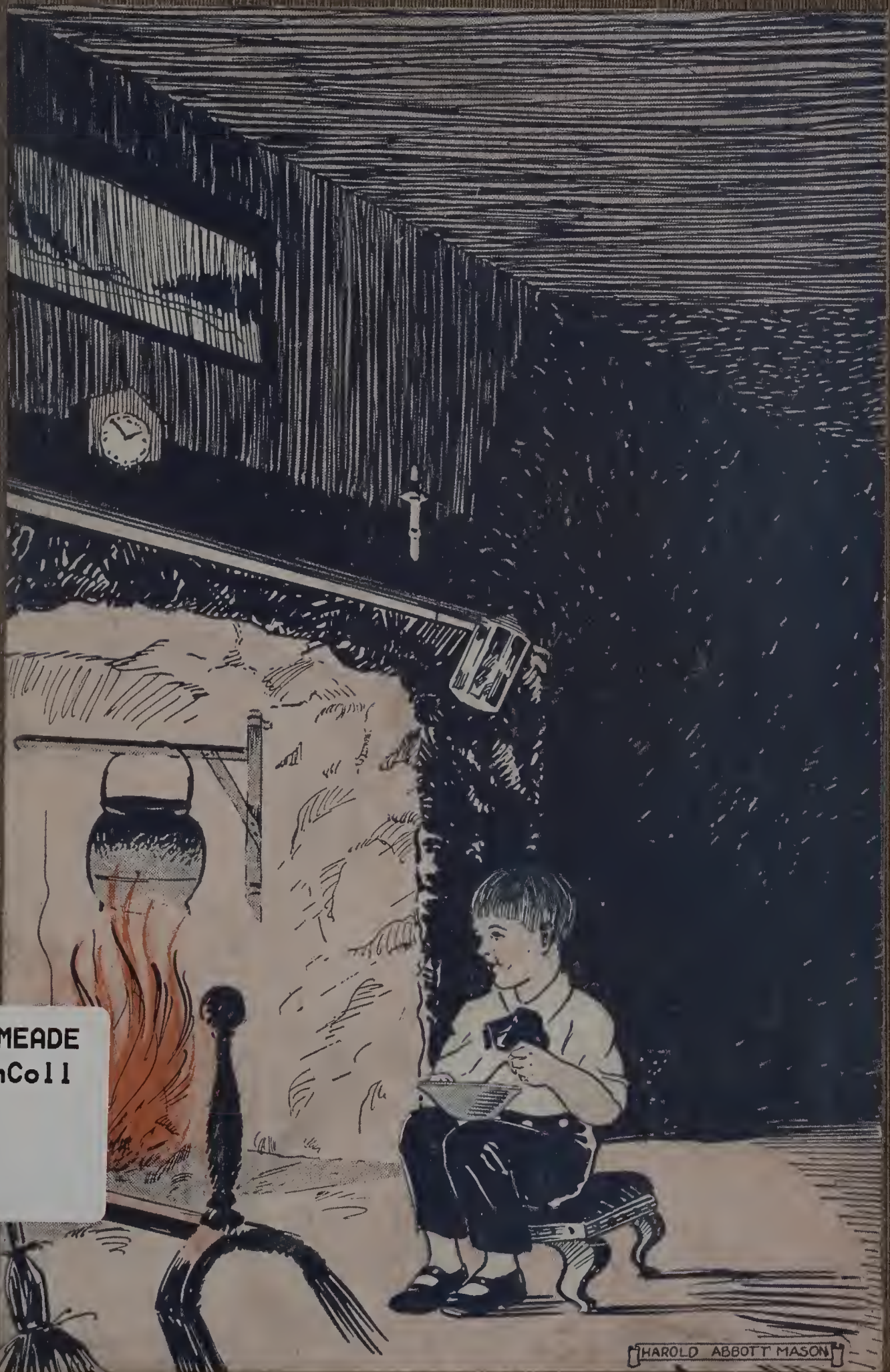
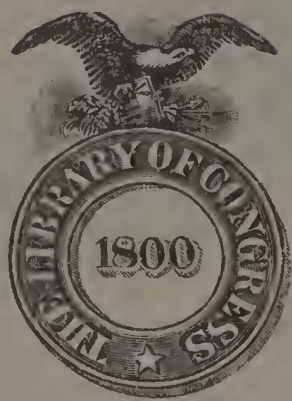


RAINBOW BOY



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HAROLD ABBOTT MASON



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GPO





Rainbow Boy

ND this one life,
exempt from
public haunt,
Finds tongue in trees,
books in the running
brooks,
Sermons in stones, and
good in everything.

—*Shakespeare.*



"Rainbow Boy and Beautiful Bubbles."

(See Page 238.)

RAINBOW BOY

by HEWES LANCASTER

*Author of Marie of Arcady
The Wind in the Garden*



*Illustrated by
HaroldcAbbottMason
And
Haidee Zack Walsh*



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Wee Wisdom.

Other

WORLD WIDE Titles

Heidi	Favorite Bible Stories
Pinocchio	Best Tales for Children
Aesops Fables	Anderson's Fairy Tales
Wonderful Tree	Stories from an Indian Cave
East O' the Sun and West O' the Moon	

31

A Just Right Book

Made in the U. S. A.

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MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So it is now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The child is father of the man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

William Wordsworth.



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FOREWORD

Rainbow Boy was a lonesome little boy. He had no sister or brother in his house—nobody with whom he could play. The only time he ever felt really happy was when his mother told him stories at bed-time. He used to say to himself:

“I wish Mother was not so busy all day. If she could tell me plenty of stories I wouldn’t mind having nobody to play with.”

But one day while he was saying that, a happy thought came to him. He jumped up and exclaimed:

“I know what I can do. I can go for a walk each day, and I can ask everything I meet to tell me its story. I’ll ask the sticks

and the stones and the trees. Yes, I'll ask everything I meet to tell me a story about itself—how it happened to be like it is. Oh, I think this is going to be great fun. I'll start right away."

Just as he was hurrying out the gate Rainbow Boy ran into two happy looking lads who were laughing and talking together:

"Hello," said the tall one. "Where are you going in such a hurry?"

"I am going for a walk," said Rainbow Boy. "I want to ask all the things I meet to tell me a story. Do you think they will do it?"

"Oh yes indeed. They will be glad to do it," said the short one. "All things like to tell their stories;

you have only to look and listen.

“My friend and I would like to tell you our stories but we haven’t any of our own. We enter into everybody else’s story though. You are going to hear a great deal about us, so I may as well tell you who we are. My comrade is Spirit of Change. When anything wants to be better than it is—it asks him to come and help it change.”

“I am glad to meet Spirit of Change,” R a i n b o w B o y said. “And who are you?”

“I am Light. I’ll run a race with you if you want me to.”

“Don’t you do it,” said Spirit of Change. “Don’t you do it. There isn’t a boy in the world who can run as fast as Light and he knows

it. That is why he is always daring somebody to race with him."

Light laughed merrily. It was such a happy little laugh that Rainbow laughed too. Then Spirit of Change said "We must be on our way. We have many things to do this day. Goodbye Rainbow Boy, we're glad we met you."

"Goodbye," said Rainbow Boy. "I hope we'll meet again some day." And down the road he hurried wondering what would be the first story he would hear.

Dear reader, if you will follow Rainbow Boy, you, too, shall hear many a story that will fill your heart with delight.

Hewes Lancaster.



"A little goat came bleating into the woods."

RAINBOW BOY



*"Won't you let me have some of your nice
juicy branches to eat?"*

THE LITTLE STUNTED TREE

As Rainbow Boy was going through the woods he met a little stunted tree. It was holding up its head cheerfully, but it looked as if it had been having a lot of ill fortune. Right away Rainbow Boy wanted to know all about it.



“O Little Stunted Tree,” he said, “won’t you please tell me your story?”

“Of course I will if you wish to hear it,” Little Stunted Tree answered politely, “but it isn’t much of a story.”

“That’s all right,” Rainbow Boy said; “go ahead and tell me. I want to hear.”

So Little Stunted Tree began:

“When I first came up out of the ground I was very slim and straight, and I said: ‘I will grow and grow and become a great big tree. Then all the little birds can come and nest in my strong branches and all the cattle can lie



down in my pleasant shade.'

"I hunted all day and all night for food and put out new leaves so fast that pretty soon I had one of the greenest, tenderest tops in all the woods.

"But one day, while I was laughing and thinking about the big tree I was going to be, a little goat came bleating into the woods. It had become lost from its mother and it was nearly starved because all the big trees were out of its reach and it could get nothing to eat.

"When the little animal came to me it found I was just the right size to feed it, and it said, 'O Little Tree, won't you let me have some

of your nice green leaves to eat so that I may keep on living till my mother comes to find me?’

“Of course I said ‘Yes.’ I was glad to help a poor little hungry thing like that. It stood beside me and ate and ate till I did not have a single leaf left. When it lay down in the sun, all warm and happy to wait for its mother, I could not feel bad about my leaves being gone, I just said: ‘I must get to work and grow some more leaves.’

“And I did grow some more leaves. They were not so green as the ones the little goat had eaten, because biting the top off made my stem divide into branches, and



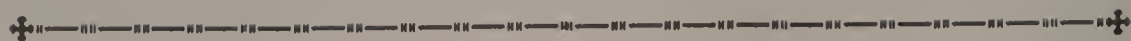
"Stood beside me and ate and ate, till I didn't have a single leaf left."



you know, Rainbow Boy, that it takes a great deal more food to feed a bunch of branches than it does to feed a single straight stem. But the sun and rain helped me all they could, and pretty soon I had a strong trunk even if my top was rather bushy.

“The big tree began to nod and say to me ‘You are coming on nicely.’ But one day, just as a big oak was saying, ‘You are getting to be quite a tree,’ a lame cow came limping along.

“She was so poor you could see her bones sticking up under her skin, but she dragged herself to me and said, ‘O Little Tree, won’t you



let me have some of your nice juicy branches to eat and make me strong enough to get home to the farmer who will feed me?’

“The big oak called out to me and said: ‘Don’t let her do it. If she bites off your top you will never grow tall.’ But the poor cow was so hungry and weak she could hardly stand.

“I could not let her lie down and die just because I wanted to grow tall, so I said, ‘Eat all you want to, poor cow.’

“She ate and ate till all my branches were gone. But it made me feel good to see her walk away



as if she felt strong enough to go home, and I said to myself, 'I must just get busy and grow more branches.'

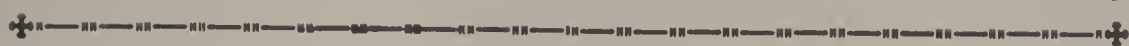
"I felt so happy that I worked harder than I had ever done before and found so much more food that my sap rose faster and faster until my bitten-off trunk threw up a strong, straight shoot. It was just the prettiest thing you ever saw, Rainbow Boy, round, green, and bursting with life. It would have made you feel glad to see the way it grew and swayed in the wind. Up and up it went. Nothing could reach it to bite it. I was going to be a great tree.



“Then a boy I loved came whistling into the woods. I had often seen him there, breaking up the fallen branches and carrying them home to make a fire for his mother.

“No matter how heavy the load was, he always went away with it, whistling. He was such a fine, merry boy, with freckles on his face and warts on his hands. It always made me feel good just to see him come into the woods.

“That day he came right to me and took hold of my strong, straight shoot and began to whip it in the air. ‘Oh Little Tree,’ he said, ‘this would make the finest fishing-pole any boy ever had.



Won't you let me have it?'

"I let him have my beautiful shoot, Rainbow boy; I had to let him have it, because, you see, I loved him. I thought at first that maybe I could grow another shoot, and I tried and tried, but I know now that I can never be a big tree; I can never be of any use in the world; I can never give shade or shelter to any living things."

Rainbow Boy came close and laid his hand gently on the brave little stunted head.

"No," he said, "you will never be able to give very much shade or shelter, but there are greater gifts than these to be given to all



living things, and even the littlest ones can give these great gifts.”

The Little Stunted Tree asked eagerly,

“Could I give these gifts, Rainbow Boy?”

“Why, yes,” Rainbow Boy said. “The greatest of all gifts are Love and Sympathy, and you have been giving these gifts all your life. No matter how hungry people may be or how happy they may be, it always helps them to receive the Great Gifts.

“You have given Love and Sympathy to all living things, O Little Stunted Tree, and you have become the noblest tree in the Forest.”

SOMETHING-TO-DO.

Rainbow Boy woke up one morning in a strange mood. He was restless and tired.

“I don’t feel like going out in search of a story this morning,” he said to himself. “I feel so tired I’m almost useless. I do wish I had someone to play with.”

He went out on the back porch and sat down on the steps. He rested his head on his hands and just looked around and around. Presently his mother opened the back door and called to him:



"He rested his head on his hands."

"Here's Something-To-Do. He wants to see you."

A happy-looking lad came bustling down the steps.

"Hello," said Rainbow Boy, cheering up, immediately, "I am glad to see you."



“I thought you would be,” said the bustling lad. “People who are feeling restless and out of sorts generally are glad to see me. But I must get to work now.”

“What are you going to do?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“Do? Why, I am going to pick up all the sticks and rubbish in this back yard and make it look neat and nice.”

“If I help you all I can,” Rainbow Boy asked, “will you tell me your story?”

“Indeed I will,” said Something-To-Do, “but it isn’t much of a story. Many, many months ago my name



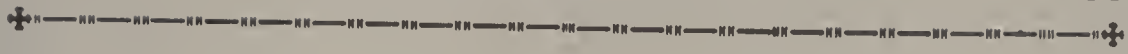
was So-Tired and I didn't have a good time at all. I just sat around wishing I had some place to go to and feeling as if I was most dead. One day Spirit-of-Change came along and asked me if I liked being So-Tired.

"I told him of course I didn't like it but that I couldn't change my name. He laughed—you know how Spirit-of-Change laughs, don't you? Well, he laughed and laughed.

" 'The idea,' he said, 'of saying you cannot change your name. Don't you know that I can change the name of anything that has earth, air and water in it? All you



"Many, many months ago my name was So-Tired."



have to do is to ask me to kiss you and give you a new name. Now what name would you like to have?’

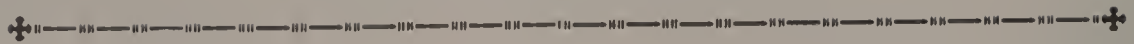
“I told him I thought almost any other name would be better than So-Tired and he said he thought so too.

“Then he kissed me and said:

‘Now you are changed and your new name is Something-To-Do.’

“It was strange. Just as soon as he said that I ran to pick up some paper that was blowing about a lawn. The good Spirit called after me and said:

“‘That’s it! And remember whenever you hear anyone saying



he's so tired he's almost dead, it's your task to help him out.' ” Rainbow Boy laughed:

“So that's why you came to me! I'm so glad you did! I feel a great deal better now.”

‘Yes,’ said Something - To - Do, ‘and the yard looks much better too. That's the jolly part about my task. I am all the time making people feel better and making places look nicer.

‘Well, I must go now. But don't forget, Rainbow Boy, the next time you are feeling restless or so tired you are most useless, make certain to call upon your best friend Something-to-Do.’ ”

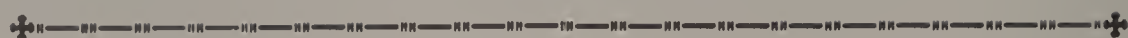


"Beautiful white birds were swooping over the waves."

SOFT ANSWER

Rainbow Boy had been invited to a Beach Party and for a while he could see nothing but the great gray Gulf of Mexico rolling its waters into the broad white beach.

Beautiful white birds were swooping down over the waves. Sunset clouds were floating about



and casting their bright colors upon the birds and upon the waters.

“How nice this is,” thought he, “I would like to sit here for the rest of my life and just look and look.”

But there were plenty of people at the Beach Party so, of course, Rainbow Boy wished to be polite and play with the other guests.

As he was about to join a group of boys who were building a sand fort one of the boys jumped up and shouted:

“You hateful thing! You kicked my castle down. You did! You kicked it as hard as you could! I saw you when you did it! You shall not play with us any more!”



“That’s all right,” a pleasant voice answered, “I will not play with you any more if you don’t want me to. I know I kicked your castle. My foot slipped. I am sorry.”

“Hello,” Rainbow Boy said to himself, “that’s Soft Answer. Nobody would ever think of calling him a coward but he always manages to keep out of trouble. I wonder how he does it. I’m going to ask him right now.”

Rainbow Boy ran after Soft Answer and as soon as he caught up with him he said:

“Please, Soft Answer, I wish you would tell me how you manage to



keep out of fights without the fellows thinking you are a coward or a sissy."

"Oh, it's easy enough for a Soft Answer to keep out of trouble," Soft Answer said. "You remember what the Bible says. But I really had a hard time of it before I grew to be a Soft Answer."

"Did you really?" said Rainbow Boy, "Weren't you always a Soft Answer?"

"Oh-h-h no," said Soft Answer. "Very few Soft Answers are born, you know. They nearly always have to be made."

"Is that so? I wish you would tell me how they are made."



“I can remember how I was made. I am sorry and ashamed to tell it but in the beginning I was a Snarling Reply, an ugly fellow always snapping at somebody and forever getting into fights. I suppose you know what a Snarling Reply is?”

“I think I do! And I am very glad you are not one any more. I’d as soon be cut across the face with a whip as to meet with a Snarling Reply. It makes me so angry.”

“Yes. When I was a Snarling Reply I made everybody cross. The angrier people became the more I snarled. Things went on



that way until nobody would have anything to do with me. I was getting very lonesome with nobody but myself to snarl at when along came Spirit-of-Change and looked me over.

“ ‘Wouldn’t you like to be something better than what you are?’ he asked. ‘There cannot be much fun in being a cross-grained fellow who is forever getting into fights. Wouldn’t you like to be something better than a snarling reply.’

“I said:

“ ‘Yes, Honest to goodness. I’d like to be somebody who never made people mad.’



"With nobody but myself to snarl at."

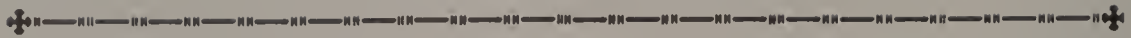


“ ‘Oh, all right then,’ said Spirit-of-Change. ‘I know just whom you want to be. The Bible says a Soft Answer turns away wrath. If you have your name changed to Soft Answer people simply can’t become angry with you any more.’

“ ‘How can I have my name changed to Soft Answer?’ I asked.

“ ‘First of all,’ said the Spirit, ‘you must take your snarl out into the back yard, dig a deep hole, and bury it. You cannot be a Soft Answer till you get well rid of your snarl. After you get rid of that I can kiss you and before you know it you will be a Soft Answer.’ ”

“I see,” said Rainbow Boy, “and so” —



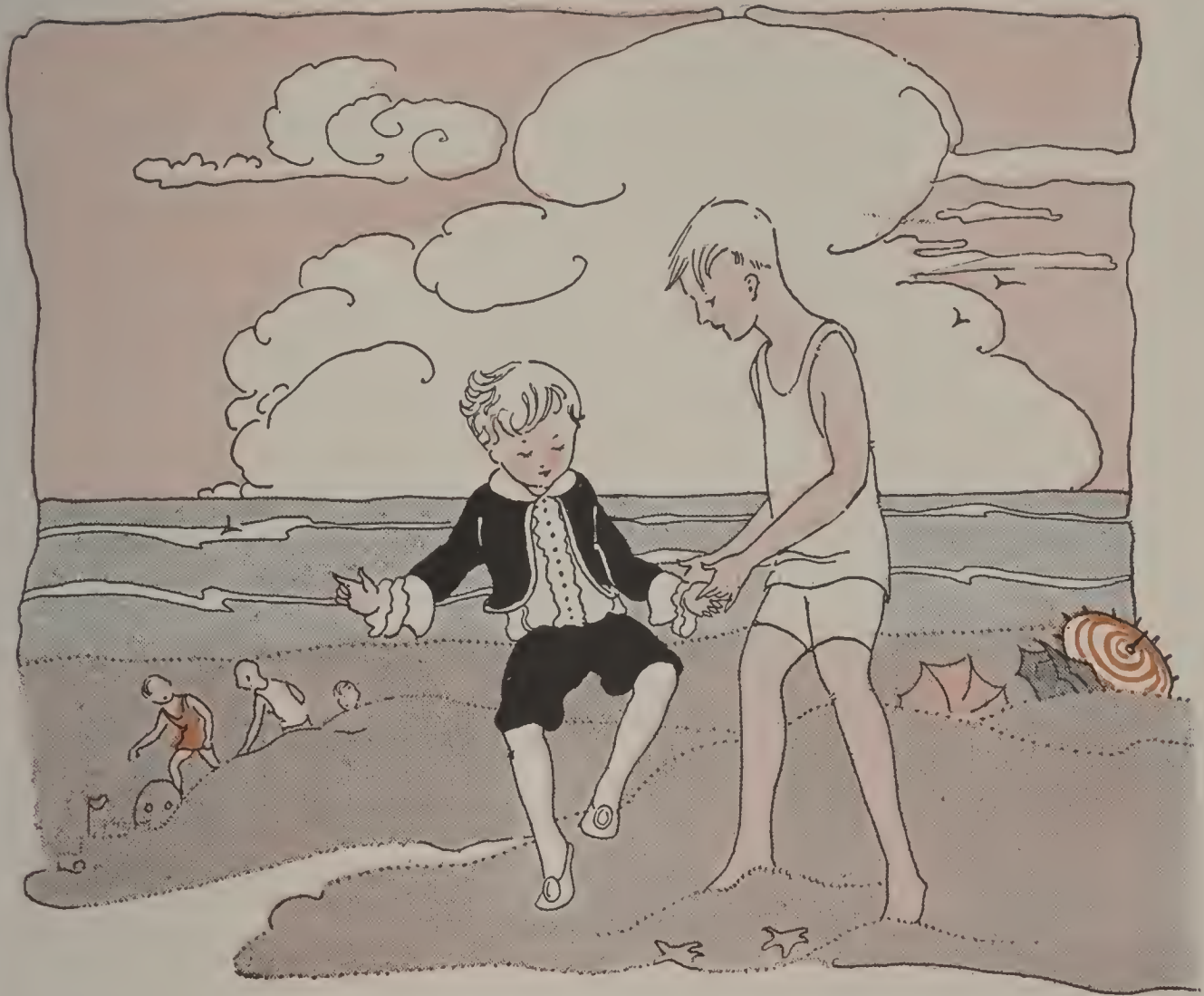
Before he could finish the boy who had shouted so rudely came running after Soft Answer and took him by the hand:

“Come on back and play with us, won’t you,” he coaxed. “I know you didn’t mean to kick my castle over. Please come on and help us build another fort. It isn’t any fun playing without you. Won’t you come?”

“Glad to,” said Soft Answer, and he went back to help the boys build their fort.

Rainbow Boy sat down on the sand to think about the story:

“It must be very bad, just too bad to be a Snarling Reply and



"Come back and play with us, won't you?" he coaxed.

have all the folks not liking you. But oh, it must be jolly to be a Soft Answer and have all the fellows wanting you in their games.”





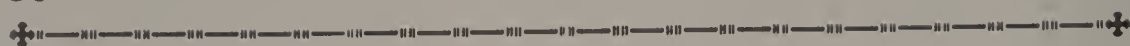
"Iron tongs clamped down on Pine Knot."

PINE KNOT

One night as he sat before his fire, Rainbow Boy picked up Pine Knot and weighed him in his hand.

"You are very heavy," he said.

"You would be heavy, too," Pine Knot answered. "if you had a heart like lead in your breast."



“Is your heart as heavy as lead?”

“Indeed it is, and heavier. Do you know what is going to be done with me?”

“What?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“I am going to be burnt up.”

“Burnt up! Why?”

“Why?” exclaimed Pine Knot.

“You ask me why? You who are going all over the world asking everything you meet to tell you its story? Why is the kind, gentle horse driven everyday while the vicious beast runs at large in the pasture? Why is the good natured cow kept up and milked while the cross one is left to roam at will?



Why are polite people always being asked to do favors while rude people go their way untroubled by anything? Why and why? I am going to be burnt up because I am rich and fat and will make a good fire.

“Those worthless chips that haven’t enough pitch in them to make even a little blaze will be left unharmed in the woodbox until winter is gone. But I? I shall burn because I am good material. It is the way of the world. You yourself know how it is. It is a bitter way.”

“No, no,” Rainbow Boy said. “It cannot be a bitter way. All is right

with the world if we could only understand.”

“Ha,” said Pine Knot, “let me tell you right now, I don’t like to be burnt up.”

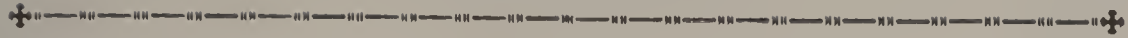
“Have you ever been burnt up?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“No, of course not. I wouldn’t be here if I had ever been burnt.”

“Then how do you know whether you would like it or not, if you have never tried it?”

“I’ve seen others burn.”

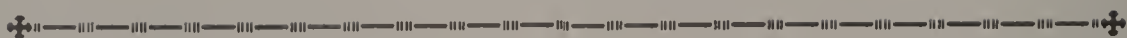
“Yes, but you can’t tell much about things by looking on. You must do and feel them before you can know. I had a friend once, a



boy, who said he didn't like to swim and he would never go into the water until one day he fell in. Then he found it was so fine we could hardly get him to come out."

"Water and fire aren't the same thing," said Pine Knot. "I wouldn't so much mind going into the water. I could just sink down to the bottom and stay there as comfortably as I am staying here. But to burn. That's terrible!"

"Perhaps it isn't. I should think you would feel proud to think that there was matter enough in you to make a good fire, just as the gentle horse feels proud to think that men



are not afraid to trust him; and as the good friend feels happy to think that people are not afraid to ask favors of him.

“It is true, Pine Knot, work may seem horribly hard sometimes, but the only way for you to be happy is to do the work you were born to do.”

“Even if it means being burnt up?”

“Yes,” said Rainbow Boy, “even”—But just then a pair of iron tongs clamped down on Pine Knot, lifted him and laid him on the bed of coals.

“Now!” said a voice from somewhere. “Now we shall have a fine

fire, for that pine knot knows how to burn.”

“Rainbow Boy made no answer to the voice, but sat watching Pine Knot as it lay upon the bed of coals. He saw that the sad fellow had begun to sweat, and he wondered if he were very much afraid to burn. Then he saw a puff of white smoke, soft as a smile, burst over Pine Knot’s face, and he knew that the brave fellow had made up his mind to do the work he was brought into the world to do.

“Ah,” Rainbow Boy said to himself, “after he once starts to work



he will find out how deep and sweet it is. I know how it is with me about doing my studies. I am always afraid at first but after I start to work—ah, how fine it is. See there.” And Rainbow Boy sat gazing in delight, for Pine Knot had stopped sweating, and had flung off all fear and burst beautifully into a blaze. His light danced joyously over the room, making everything in it look bright and happy; his warmth glowed until everybody in the room stretched in his chair and said:

“What a comfort a good pine knot is!”

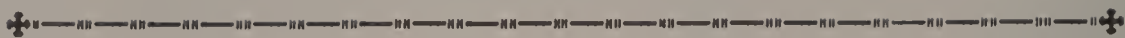


Rainbow Boy sat gazing in delight.

PURPLE NIGHT

Rainbow Boy went out to the woods to wait for Purple Night because he wanted to hear her story, and he knew that she could not come into his room, where the lighted candles were. He lay in the grass and sang while the sun went down and the sunset wasted away for he was certain that his friend would not come while there remained in the sky the faintest trace of red.

But after the blue above him grew solemn-looking, Rainbow



Boy stopped singing and began to listen and pretty soon he knew that Purple Night was coming. First the birds in the bushes became very still, then the grass began to spread all its blades wide open. "That means she is bringing her daughter, Dew, with her," Rainbow Boy said to himself. Next a tree toad high up overhead began to cry:

"Here! Here! Here!"

And an old owl deep in the dusk asked:

"Who? Who? Who?"

Rainbow Boy had no need to ask who was here. He arose quickly and said:



“Who? Who? Who?”

“O great friend, I give you greeting.”

Purple Night came close and touched him on the face, and though she seemed so grave her voice was very gentle when she asked:

“What troubles send you to me for a dream, little friend?”



Rainbow Boy had his answer ready:

“O, Purple Night,” he said “I have come to you many times for a dream to drive away trouble, but this time I have come to you for a story. If you would tell me your story I should be so happy.”

Now it was with Purple Night as with all other big, quiet people. She did not like to talk about herself. But there is nothing in the world that can refuse to tell Rainbow Boy its story when he asks for it, and so Purple Night began hers at once:

“You know, for the Book has told you, I am very old. In the

beginning there were only the earth and I. We were near and dear to each other but we were lonely because there was no life, no voice to go singing from us to the stars, no cry of fear, no laugh of joy.

“Earth wanted these things and when she found that I could give her only dark and cold she began to weep, and the sight of tears upon the face of my friend made me very sorrowful. We wept together and our tears ran down into the basin that earth had hollowed out among her hills and called a sea.

“The sea was filled with the salt and bitter water of our tears, but



it, too, was dark and cold, and when I saw that I could do nothing to bring joy to the earth it seemed as though my heart would break. Rainbow Boy, you know how it is.

“The thing we sorrow over most often proves to be the source of our purest stream of joy; but I was young then, and did not know the working out of wisdom. I went on weeping until the voice spoke and reproved me, saying:

“‘Earth was made to be a happy place, and you have covered her face with tears. See now, Light shall come for the half of every day to take earth away from you and teach her to laugh and be kind

that she may be happy.'

"When I saw the glow of light coming through the cloud I could think of nothing but to find a place where I might hide, and said to myself:

"The sea! The sea is deep and rough and dark. Light will never be able to find his way to the bottom of it, so I stole down to the bottom of the sea and lay hiding there, cold and sad, and very, very lonely. But not for long.

"Light, the glad fellow, soon found out where I was hiding, and you know how he is, how he wants everybody to be honest and happy.

"He could not come himself to

the bottom of the sea, but he sent his brightest beams down to tell me that if I would only come up through the dark and cold and meet him half way, he would give me three little children to be my very own, and I should not be lonely any more. And these are the children light gave me—Dawn, my bright-eyed boy, who is so like his father; Dew, my gentle little daughter, who goes with me wherever the wind is not blowing,—Earth loves her so; and Dream, the dear, dear child who is with me always.”

So her story ended and before Rainbow Boy could thank her for



"Dawn, my bright eyed boy."

it, Purple Night had passed on swiftly with Dew and Dream to the bars where Dawn, her bright-eyed boy, was waiting.



"Spirit-of-Change"

CHUNK OF CHARCOAL

One day Rainbow Boy went into the laundry, where old Mammy was getting ready to do the ironing, and there he saw a Chunk of Charcoal lying by the furnace. He picked it up and gave a laugh:

“How odd! you are the blackest fellow I ever saw,” he said. “And yet you have a very cheerful face. Won’t you tell me your story?”

“Yes,” said Chunk of Charcoal, “my story is a long one, but I’ll tell it all to you if I have time before Mammy burns me up.”

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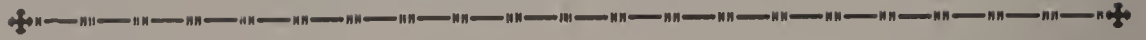
“Burns you up,” cried Rainbow Boy, “That’s very bad. What makes Mammy burn you up.”

“Oh, she is going to burn me up to make the irons hot so she can iron your best white shirt for next Sunday.”

“I would not like to be burnt up,” said Rainbow Boy.

“You wouldn’t mind it if you were a Chunk of Charcoal, but if I am to tell you my story I had better begin because Mammy is getting her laundry stove ready.

“Once upon a time I was part of a beautiful green tree, just the cleanest piece of wood one would wish to see. My duty was to pass



up the sap from the roots to the branches and to bring back and stow away the matter the leaves breathed in for the tree.”

“What kind of matter did the leaves breathe in for the tree” asked Rainbow Boy.

“Oh, leaves breathe in the kind of matter you breathe out just as you breathe in the matter that the leaves breathe out. That is why a pine tree and a boy are such healthy company for each other. The pine tree breathes out ozone to make the boy strong and the boy breathes out carbon-dioxide to make the tree strong. And therefore that is why I am going



"One day some men came with some saws and axes."

to make such a good fire when I burn.

“All the time I was in the tree I was stowing away carbon-dioxide. Every time a fire burns something, it turns loose a lot of carbon-dioxide and every time any living thing breathes it turns loose some more carbon-dioxide. The leaves breathed it in and I stowed it away. But to go on with my story:

“One day some men came with saws and axes. They cut down my tree and a lot of others and began to cut the trees up into logs four feet long. I was scared and unhappy because I thought I was going to die.

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“How could I live any longer when I was cut away from the leaves that did my breathing and the roots that fed me with sap! While I was lying there as wretched as a log could be, Spirit-of-Change came along. You know what a fine, happy fellow he is, Rainbow Boy. Why, he is never afraid of anything! When I told him how scared I was he laughed and said:

“‘Let me Kiss you and you will be all right.’

“After he had kissed me he said:

“‘Now you are coal wood. Very soon these men will stack you up with all these other sticks of coal

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wood and cover you with dirt. They will set fire to you and you will smolder along for two weeks. Then the men will rake you out of the dust and ashes and cool you off and you will be a Chunk of Charcoal.

“ ‘Men will buy you and carry you far away and before many days have passed you will be emptied out on the floor in Mammy’s laundry. When ironing day comes, Mammy will burn you in her stove. But don’t let that trouble you because as fast as you burn you will turn into carbon-dioxide and fly up in the air straight to a tall green tree. The



leaves of the tree will breathe you in and before you have time to think about it you will be back again in the heart of a tree.'

"I see," said Rainbow Boy, "that is why you don't mind being burnt. You know it is just a part of a regular plan."

"That's it," said the Chunk of Charcoal, "the great God has planned it all out, and when the time comes for us to begin being something different He sends Spirit-of-Change to kiss us and keep us from being scared."

Mammy picked up the Chunk of Charcoal and put it in the stove and very soon it began to glow



“‘How odd. You are the blackest fellow I ever saw,’ he said.”

and burn. Rainbow Boy watched it glow brighter and brighter until all its black had turned to a burning red.

“Just look, Mammy,” he said, “the Chunk of Charcoal is burning up and it isn’t the least bit scared because it knows that the great God planned it all out and it is going to fly straight up into the heart of that tall strong tree.

LITTLE SONG

Rainbow Boy was trying to hurry home because the sky looked stormy and he was afraid it was going to rain. But try as hard as he would he could not get along very fast. He kept looking back over his shoulder to see how black the clouds were getting and every time he looked back, he stumbled.

“Dear me,” he kept saying, “I’m afraid it will rain before I reach home. Mother will be so worried if I get wet.”



"When he tried to jump back he slipped and fell."

It thundered so loud that Rainbow Boy jumped right out of the road. When he tried to jump back he slipped and fell.



“I know I’ll never get home now before it rains. My new suit will be ruined. Maybe I’ll get sick and have to go to bed and—”

“Please, Rainbow Boy,” called a little voice at his feet, “please stop a minute and take me into your heart.”

Rainbow Boy looked down and there right in the road before him was Little Song.

“Please stop a minute,” asked the little fellow.

“Oh, I cannot stop now,” said Rainbow Boy, “I’m in a very big hurry.”

“Oh, please, please,” coaxed Little Song. “It won’t take but one



breath to put me into your heart and if I stay out here I'll get wet and then I'll be sick and have to take medicine."

"Poor little fellow," Rainbow Boy said. He stopped and put Little Song into his heart.

"Oh, this feels fine," said Little Song. "Now, let's sing."

"Sing," cried Rainbow Boy. "Can't you see those clouds? Don't you hear that thunder? This is no time to sing."

"Oh, yes it is," said Little Song. "When the clouds are turning black and the day is growing dark, and you are a long way from home and beginning to feel lonely

and scared, that's the very time to sing. Don't you know that?"

"Oh, nonsense, nonsense," said Rainbow Boy, "I haven't any time to talk about it. Go ahead and sing if you want to."

"But I want you to sing with me."

"You want me to sing? It's foolish, Little Song, how can I sing when I am in such a hurry."

"It doesn't take any time to sing. Please, Rainbow Boy, sing this song with me. Start now, both of us together:

"The children sing in far Japan,
The children sing in Spain.
The organ and the organ man
Are singing in the rain."

Rainbow Boy could not help laughing.

“We’ll be singing in the rain too
first thing we know.”

Little Song laughed too.

“That was fine. Let’s sing it again.”

They sang the song again and when it was done they laughed and sang it again. Every time they sang it faster and faster.

The faster they sang the faster Rainbow Boy walked. He forgot to look back at the gathering clouds so of course he stopped stumbling. The next time it thundered he was singing so loud he hardly heard it.



“Let’s see how fast and how loud we can sing it this time,” said Little Song.

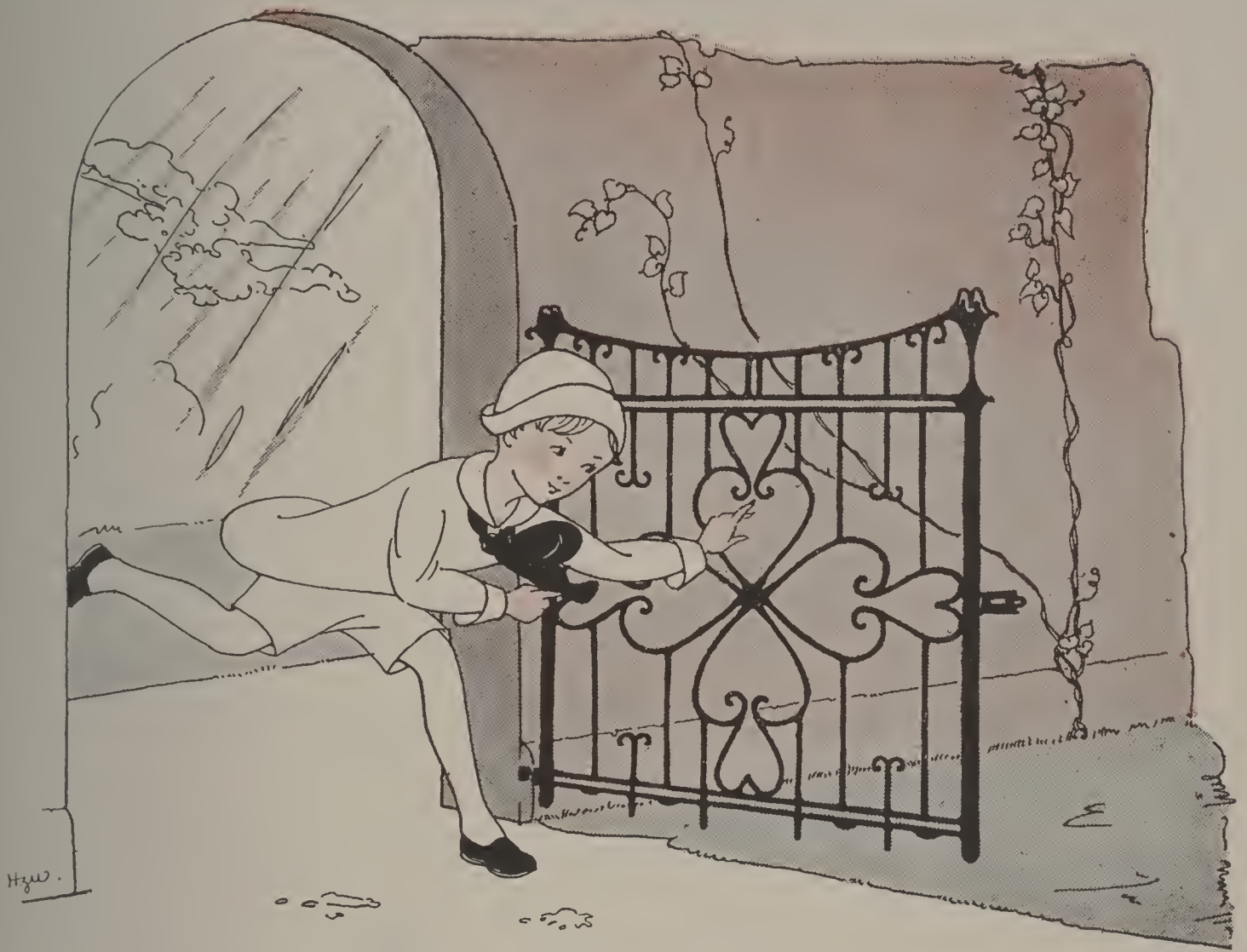
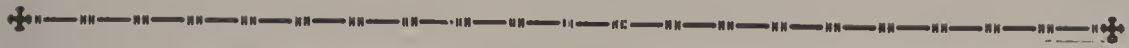
“All right,” called Rainbow Boy, and away they went singing merrily:

“The children sing in far Japan,
The children sing in Spain.
The organ and the organ-man
Are singing in the rain.”

As they finished the last line, Rainbow Boy saw a fence-corner that he knew.

“Look at that, Little Song, we are almost home. Let’s run!”

Just as the first big drops fell Rainbow Boy dashed in at the gate and ran up on the porch



"A boy's eyes look as brave as a man's."

where his mother was watching for him.

"Oh, Mother," he cried. "Guess what I have in my heart."

"I don't have to guess," his mother said. "I know what you

have in your heart. It's Little Song."

"Well, Mother! How could you tell."

His mother smiled:

"I could tell by your eyes," she said. "A boy's eyes look as brave as a man's when he has Little Song in his heart."



LONELY PLACE

One morning Rainbow Boy started out and before long he came to Lonely Place. He stopped to look and to listen. The sun shone down sadly, the wind sighed, and everything was so hushed that Rainbow Boy was almost frightened.

“Oh, Lonely Place,” he whispered, “why are you so lonely?”

Lonely Place smiled sorrowfully:

“Oh, Rainbow Boy,” she answered, “why are you so cheerful?”

“I don’t know,” Rainbow Boy told her, “I just happen to be that



way.”

“But I know,” Lonely Place said softly, “you are friendly with Spirit-of-Change. You like him, don’t you?”

“Indeed I do! He is a fine lively fellow. Aren’t you and he good friends?”

“No, he and I quarreled a long time ago and he has never come near me since.” Lonely Place sighed and Rainbow Boy came nearer:

“Tell me about it,” he said.

“I was young,” Lonely Place began. “I was young and I wanted to be beautiful. I did not want to work for beauty, I just wanted to



"And everything was so hushed."



sit still and become lovely looking. Spirit-of-Change kept coming to me and wanting me to do this and to do that, and he said I would not be of any account unless I did something. I answered him with the poet's line:

“ ‘They also serve who only stand and wait.’

“He said that waiting was doing something—that in so far as he knew, it was the hardest work in the world to do. And he went on talking, telling me that nobody could be beautiful unless he were busy.

“I repeated another verse I knew:



“ ‘Peace and quietness are pleasant, and through them runs the path that leads to all serenity of beauty.’

“He said, ‘Yes, that is true too, but sitting down thinking about nothing but yourself all day long isn’t “peace and quietness”—it is stagnation and selfishness.’

“I grew selfish then because what he said sounded as if it might be true and I told him he had better live his life and leave me to live my own.

“And what did he say then, Lonely Place?”

“He said, ‘All right, I don’t have to stand knocking at a shut door. There are plenty of people ready



"He said, 'Yes, that is true, too'."

to let me in.' ”

“So he went away?”

“Yes, he went away. And as soon as he was out of sight I said to myself:

“‘Now I will have peace and quietness.’ And I sat down to become beautiful. But hardly had my eyes closed to dream when a calf began to bleat down there and a cow over yonder moo’d and moo’d.

“How could I have peace and quietness when all this bleating and moo’ing were going on. Then I thought what I could do. I could wither my grass so no beast would

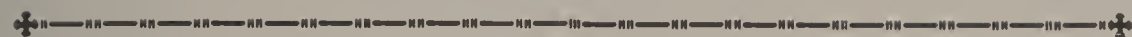
come to browse on it. I began at once to wither every grass blade that I had and the cattle drew away farther and farther until there was



"I could wither my grass so no beast would come to browse on it."

no browsing beast left in my meadows.

"And again I sat down to dream and grow beautiful, but first one



bird began to sing and then another and another until the air rang and quivered with their trills and warbles. I started from my dreams in anger. How could I dream of beauty while all these birds were here to awake the silence with their singing? I soon saw what I could do and I called aloud:

“‘I will do it! I will dry up all my brooks so that the birds will have no water to drink. A bird cannot sing unless it has water.’

“Some of my brooks were very pretty; it did seem a pity to dry them up, but I had to have peace and quietness. I drained the little

brooks drier and drier until there was nothing but a few red stones left to show where the water had run. The birds flew away farther and farther.

“That night when Moon came up she looked down on my dry brooks and withered grass and she said:

“ ‘Why, what have we here?’

“I answered:

“ ‘We have peace and quietness.’

“Moon said nothing more, just smiled her wan white smile and covered her face with a cloud.

“Next morning Light came laughing along and stopped his



"The Moon said nothing more—just smiled her wan, white smile and covered her face with a cloud."

laughter to exclaim in surprise:

“ ‘What has become of the life that was given you to care for? What have you done with your birds and beasts?’

“And I answered again:

“ ‘I have driven them all away that I may have peace and quiet and so grow into serene beauty.’

“Light flashed his bright eyes all over me and saw that it was true and he said in dismay:

“ ‘You have sent your birds and beasts away that you may have peace and quiet? Oh, foolish one! Don’t you know that there can be no peace and quiet without life? Peace is strength in repose and

quiet is harmony of purpose and power.

“‘You should have grown your grass so deep and so sweet that no beast should ever bleat with hunger, and you should have fed and watered your birds until their singing became a choir of joyous content. But you, in your silly selfishness, what have you done? Dried up your brooks and withered your grass. Do you know what you have made of yourself? Ah, well! A little child shall tell you.’

“He called a little child and showed me to her. The child looked at me and listened and ran away crying:

“ ‘Oh, Mother, Mother, come and see Poor Lonely Place.’ ”

“But surely,” Rainbow Boy said, “surely you need not stay lonely always. You can call back your beasts and your birds.”

Lonely Place spoke sadly:

“You forget my grass is withered and my brooks are dry.”



PLEASANT WORD

One day Rainbow Boy was going along a dismal street when all at once he saw it light up and begin to look happy.

“Ah,” he said, “Pleasant Word must be coming. Now I shall have a chance to talk to that fellow. He is one of the nicest lads I know, and I have been wanting to hear his story ever since I met him that first time.”

Pleasant Word came along making everybody he passed look happier, and when Rainbow Boy asked him to stop and talk a minute, he nodded nicely and said:



*“One day he was going along a
dismal street.”*

“All right.”

“I want you to tell me your story,” said Rainbow Boy. “I want to know if there is earth, air, and water in you and if you were ever kissed by Spirit-of-Change.”



“Now, Rainbow Boy,” said Pleasant Word, “I am certain you know that there is bound to be earth, air and water in every living thing, and that every living thing is sure to be kissed some day by Spirit-of-Change.”

“Well, anyway,” said Rainbow Boy, “I want you to tell me your story.”

“All right,” Pleasant Word replied cheerily. “It is not a long story, and you shall hear it. In the beginning, long ago, in a dark, unhappy time my name was Sul-len Silence. Everybody that came near scowled at me and I scowled back at everybody with all my



might. The world was a cold and cruel place and I was just as cold and cruel as the world was.

“I spent most of my time in an ugly corner with Dislike and Dyspepsia and some other disgruntled people, but I didn’t like them, though they seemed to like me well enough to try to keep me between them and away from everybody else.

“One day while I was sulking and scowling there I caught sight of a bright light coming toward us, and as soon as Dislike and all the rest of our grumpy crowd caught sight of that light they began grabbing at me and pushing

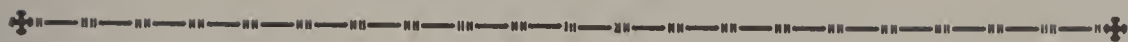
me between them.

“ ‘It’s Spirit - of - Change,’ they cried. ‘Here, quick, Sullen Silence, get between us. There is that light-headed fellow that is forever upsetting things and trying to make people different.’

I was between them all right. I couldn’t help myself, they grabbed and pushed me so; but while I was sitting there watching the light coming nearer I began thinking about what they had said, — that it was Spirit-of-Change and that he was forever trying to make people different. I wondered if he would try to make me different, and if he did, how different



"I was sitting there watching the light coming nearer."



he would make me.

“Many times when I was sulking in my corner I had seen passing people meet and shake hands and laugh together. I wondered if Spirit-of-Change could make me so different that people would ever want to shake hands with me. I thought how fine it would be not to have everybody scowling at me all the time, and I told myself that if Spirit-of-Change came near enough I would ask him to make me different.

“I don’t suppose, though, that I would have asked him, because you know how it is, Rainbow Boy. It is easy enough to wish



you were different, but it is not so easy to get to work and do something to make yourself different.

“But it happened that just before Spirit-of-Change reached me he came to a puddle of the muddiest water you ever saw. The puddle cried out to him and asked him to make it different. Spirit-of-Change stooped down and kissed it, and right away the muddy water turned into a lovely little white cloud, and when I saw it go sailing away so happily high up in the blue sky I called out and said:

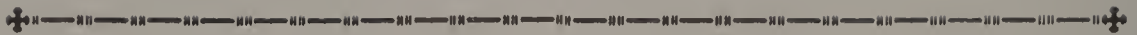
“ ‘O Spirit - of - Change, please

come here!’

“ ‘Gladly,’ he said, ‘I am always glad to go to anybody that calls me. Now, you sorry-looking fellow, what can I do for you?’

“I told him I wanted to be made different so that people would stop scowling at me. Spirit-of-Change began to laugh. You have heard him laugh, I guess. It’s like birds and brooks and all kinds of merry things. I knew he was laughing at me, but he was so merry, I couldn’t get angry.

“ ‘Boy,’ he said, ‘don’t you know that if you want people to stop scowling at you all you’ve got to do is to stop scowling at them?’



“Then he kissed me on both cheeks and slapped me on the shoulder and said:

“ ‘Now step out there in the path and see how nicely you can say good-morning to those worried-looking women.’

“I did it as nicely as I could, and the women stopped looking so worried, and nodded and said good-morning to me. As they went by, I heard one of them say:

“ ‘That was Pleasant Word that spoke to us. Isn’t he a nice person to meet?’

“I was so surprised I couldn’t really believe what I heard and hurried back to ask Spirit-of-

Change, but the bright, busy chap had gone on his way and while I was hurrying after him I met some anxious men that had just been laid off and were looking for another job. I gave them as nice a good-morning as I could. They each nodded to me kindly though I could see they were not happy, and I heard one say to the others:

“‘It is fine to meet Pleasant Word when you are in need of cheer’.”

“So I knew it was true. The Spirit had given me a nice new name. I wasn’t to be Sullen Silence any more. I ran as fast as I could until I was far away from



"It is fine to meet Pleasant Word."

that ugly corner and its grumpy crowd and I have been very busy going to and fro in the world ever since.

“All I can do is to give a little cheery greeting to the people I meet, but everybody seems to be so glad to meet me that I am just as happy as happy can be. I know, Rainbow Boy, it is jolly to be a Pleasant Word.”



OLD STICK

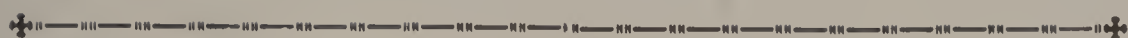
R a i n b o w Boy was going through a swampy place one day when he came upon Old Stick. Its bark was falling off, the mold had gathered, and it looked all dead and done with.

“Poor Old Stick,” said Rainbow Boy, softly, “how dead you are!”

“Not so dead as you seem to think,” Old Stick said cheerfully. “If you sit down here and watch a while, you will see that I am very much alive. Spirit-of-Change



"Not so dead as you seem to think."



has slipped in under my bark and is urging Earth, Air, and Water to go away with him. Such a talk and plan, it is enough to make my moss turn green again.”

“Earth, Air, and Water!” said Rainbow Boy. “Are they all living with you?”

Old Stick lit up his lichens with a smile:

“They all are with me,” he said. “Earth, Air, and Water are myself.”

“Earth, Air, and Water are you? I wish you could tell me how that is?”

“Oh, it is easy enough to tell,” Old Stick replied, “but it is a long story.”

“I like long stories,” cried Rainbow Boy.

“Well, once upon a time my heart was a hard little seed. It cared for nothing and so, of course, nothing cared for it. It just kept on lying there in the bed of dry dust where the wind had dropped it, hard almost as a pebble, without thought or feeling, until one day Spirit-of-Change happened to pass that way.

“As soon as he saw my heart, nothing would do but he must get inside of it. And as soon as he got there he set up a shout, calling Earth, Air, and Water to come quickly, he had found a fine place



"Calling Earth, Air and Water to come quickly."

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for them to form a home. They came, crowding in a hurry, but my heart was a hard little place and didn't take people in easily.

“They went to work, though, to get in. First Water began and poured drops down on me until I was wet through and had to swell. That cracked my shell just the least little bit, but in a minute Air had slipped through the crack and was saying to Spirit-of-Change:

“ ‘Here, help me make this hole bigger so his roots can get out. Earth wants them.’

“They pushed and pried until between them they split my heart wide open. Oh, it grew vexed

enough at being treated that way. It didn't want to get soft and tender and open so wide that it could take in everybody.

"It wanted to stay hard as a pebble and care for nothing. But there is no use in getting vexed with Spirit-of-Change. When he comes he is going to have things his own way.

"So I began to grow. Oh, Rainbow Boy, did you ever begin to grow? Do you know how it feels?

"It hurts, of course; you have to let go of so many narrow notions, and you have to stretch and strain to get hold of the fine, big notions, and yet it is so nice! You reach

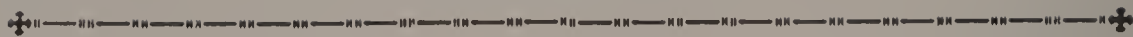
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out to the rain and the sun, and you open your heart to Earth and Air and Water. You keep getting bigger and braver. You laugh and wave your branches, and you call out to all things that want shade or shelter:

“‘Come on! come on! I am strong enough for us both.’

“Oh, it is nice to grow, even if you do have to struggle with the storm and stand bare-headed beneath the lightning. It is better to grow than to stay snug and safe in a hard little seed.”

“Yes,” said Rainbow Boy, “it is nice to grow. But now, Old Stick, you are dead. You can’t grow any more.”



“Dead?” Old Stick’s smile gleamed again upon his lichens. “Oh, little Friend, don’t you know that when you have opened your heart wide to Earth, Air, and Water you cannot die? Spirit-of-Change may come to you and make a great bustle inside your bark, but you will not die. A bit of you will fly away with Air; some of you will flow away with Water; more of you will mellow away with Earth. But pretty soon you will hear Spirit-of-Change calling you to form another home. Then all the parts of you will be gathered together again with life pulsing freshly in your heart.”



"I am going to see who it is."

BROKEN WORD

As Rainbow Boy came whistling down the hill he thought he heard someone sobbing and stopped his whistling to listen.

"True enough," he said, "there

is someone sobbing in that thicket. I am going to see who it is.”

He left the path, pushed his way through the bushes and came to a little fellow lying on the ground.

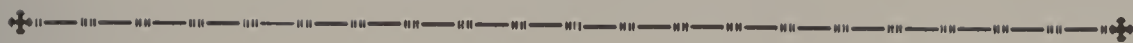
“Hello,” he said, “why are you lying in the dirt crying like that. Why don’t you get up from there and try to be a man.”

The little fellow lifted his face, and it was the dirtiest face Rainbow Boy had ever seen.

“I can’t get up,” the dirty face said, “I can never get up again.”

“Goodness,” cried Rainbow Boy, “that sounds untrue to me. What is your name?”

“My name is Word,” said the



little fellow, and he began to cry again harder than before.

“Hold on!” said Rainbow Boy, “I don’t see why you should cry because your name is Word. The Words are good people. I know a person who thinks more of his Word than of anything else he has. He’ll fight for his Word any day.”

“Oh, I know,” sobbed the little dirty fellow. “It’s all right when you are a good Word, but I’m a broken Word and nobody will ever have anything more to do with me. It is so terrible, Rainbow Boy to be a broken Word. Everybody kicks you around and laughs at you. I couldn’t bear it. I sneaked

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out into this thicket and hid myself. And I will have to stay here till I die. A mean, broken Word.” And he began to sob again with his face in the dirt.

Rainbow Boy felt sorry for the poor, dirty fellow.

“Have courage,” he said, “it can’t be so bad as that. God always gives a fellow another chance. Sit up now like a man and tell me your story.”

Not even a Broken Word could refuse to tell its story to Rainbow Boy, so the dirty little fellow sat up and said:

“It won’t take long to tell my story. Once upon a time I was a

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nice clean word. I belonged to a boy named Harry. He wasn't a very big boy or a very brave boy but he took good care of me and I was very happy. People called me 'Harry's Word' and all the other Words gave me a nod and a smile when we met. That was before I was broken. There isn't a Word in the world that would give me a nod and a smile now."

"Go on. Tell me how you came to be broken."

"Harry broke me. He didn't want to break me. He cried when he did it. He knew how hard I had tried to keep myself bright and clean so everybody would

say 'That's Harry's word and it's as good as gold.' But he broke me. He did! It wasn't my fault. I wanted to be all right. But Harry broke me. And now I am a poor broken thing that nobody has any use for."

"Cheer up," said Rainbow Boy, "I'm just as sorry for you as I can be. What made Harry break you?"

"He became scared. That's what he did. Some little girls knew where a quail's nest was. They were watching it to see when the little quails hatched. They told Harry they would show it to him if he would promise not to tell the



big boys who wanted to get the eggs. Harry promised. The big boys asked Harry where the nest was and Harry said he had given the girls his Word not to tell.

“The boys laughed out loud and said:

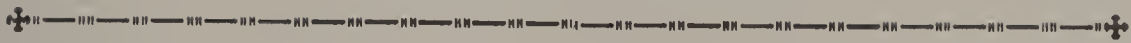
“ ‘Well, if you do not want a thrashing you had better break your Word.’

“I clung tight to Harry and begged him not to break me. He told the boys he wouldn’t break his word, and I was so proud of him. But the big boys laughed out loud again and began to cut at Harry’s legs with their long switches.



“Harry began to cry and then—he broke me. Oh, Rainbow Boy, when those girls came and saw me lying there all broken in the dirt I wanted to die. It was terrible the way they looked at me. And the boys that had made Harry break me, never lost a chance to give me a kick. There wasn’t anything too mean for them to say about Harry’s Word. So I sneaked away and hid in this thicket and I will have to stay here as long as I live and be nothing but a mean, Broken Word.”

“Oh, no you haven’t!” cried Rainbow Boy. “You have had bad



fortune and I feel for you with all my heart; but as I told you before, God always gives a fellow another chance. There's a creek I know of that people call Pluck Creek. You can wash in it till you are as clean as a daisy and then we are going to find Harry and try him again."

Broken Word jumped up:

"Oh, Rainbow Boy, do you think I could ever be clean again?"

"Yes, indeed, come on and let's try for it. I'll show you where the creek is."

Broken Word dived into the clear cold water of Pluck Creek and washed himself until he had washed away all his dirt and tears.

When he came out nice and clean nobody would have ever known he was a Broken Word if his eyes had not been so sad.

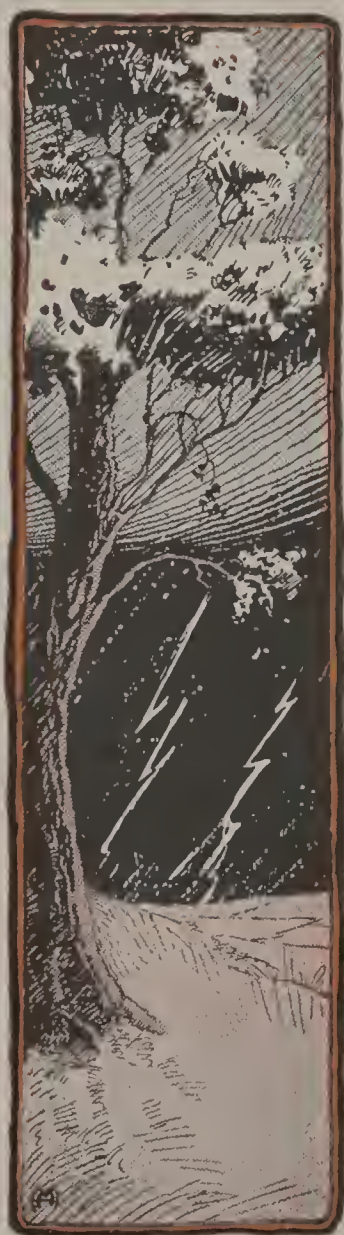
“Never mind,” Rainbow Boy said, “All of us have to be sad sometimes. Now let’s find Harry.”

When they found Harry he was going to school. His head hung down and he looked as lonesome as a boy always looks when he has broken his Word.

“Good morning,” Rainbow Boy said. “Here’s your Word come to try you again.”

“My Word,” said Harry, “do you mean that clean-looking fellow is the Word I threw into the dirt?”

“Why you plucky fellow, if you will just come back and be my word once more the big boys can beat me till the blood runs, but I’ll never break you again.”



PRETTY PEBBLE

One day when he was coming from the brook, Rainbow Boy picked up a pebble in the path. It was a clear gray on one side and a bright pink on the other and right away he said:

“O Pretty Pebble won’t you please tell me your story?”

“Why, of course,” said Pretty Pebble, “I will be glad to tell you my story. But perhaps it isn’t much of a story, there are not any lions in it.”

“That’s all right,” said Rainbow Boy, “the lion told me his story



one day at the Zoo. Now I want to hear your story. Please begin just as far back as you can remember.”

“Well,” said Pretty Pebble, “the first thing I remember I was lying in the brook and the busy water was polishing me to make me smooth and bright. It was a pleasant place but I was not at all happy there because I did not know, Rainbow Boy, that we cannot be happy in any place unless we have some work to do there. I know that now, but I did not know it then.”

“I thought that work was hard and disagreeable and that the way

to be happy was to sit down in a good place and watch others do the work.

“So I found a soft place in the mud at the edge of the brook and sat down to look on. It was very stupid and everything around me seemed stupid and still. Out in the middle of the brook were a lot of pebbles holding on to the bottom of the brook with one cheek and chattering all the time. I watched them and saw they were as busy as they could be catching every grain of sand that the water brought along and packing it down between them. I watched them for a long time and then I thought to myself:



"One day, when he was coming from the brook, Rainbow Boy picked up a pebble in the path."



“‘You foolish things, don’t you know that no matter how hard you work or how much sand you catch there will always be more grains of sand coming along?’

“Out in the middle of the stream was Current just as busy as it could be catching every drop of water that came trickling down from the spring at the head or from the rills at the side of the brook. How that Current did work, catching the drops and hurrying them away. And I thought to myself:

“‘You foolish thing don’t you know that no matter how many drops you hurry down there will

always be more drops trickling along?’

“The more I looked on the more useless everything seemed and the more unhappy I became. And I suppose I would have turned into a black stone if Light had not come along and caught sight of me. He looked at me and laughed; then he called Spirit-of-Change and sent him down to kiss me. I didn’t want Spirit-of-Change to kiss me; I felt sick and mean and I wanted to be let alone. But Spirit-of-Change kissed me anyway and said:

“Go ahead now, start to work, start to work and be happy!”

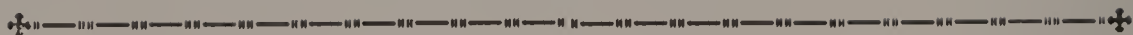


“ ‘Why work?’ I said, ‘what is the reason for starting to work? Work never ends.’

“At t h a.t, Spirit - of - Change laughed until all the water around us was glittering with his glee.

“ ‘Oh, you sick Stone,’ he said. ‘Of course work never ends. Don’t you know that if work ended, gladness would have to end also. And what would Life do without gladness? Here, Ripple, help me make a Pretty Pebble well.’

“And you know, Rainbow Boy, how all the Ripples love Spirit-of-Change. All he has to do is to beckon and they begin sparkling and dancing. So as soon as he



called, they came running, dozens of them. They slipped under and around me, they rolled me over and over until I was way out in the middle of the bed where all the pebbles were crying ‘Catch it, catch it!’ and hugging the sand down hard with their cheeks.

“One of the busiest of them cried to me: ‘Take hold, take hold. We are trying to catch sand enough to build a bar so that when little children come to wade they can cross from bank to bank in safety.’

“It was strange, but just as soon as I heard that and thought of the way those little children would

laugh when they found they could go all the way across I seemed to become glad all over. In a minute I had my cheek pressed hard to the bed and was catching sand as fast as I could. I was so happy, no wonder my cheek turned pink.

Pretty Pebble stopped talking as though the story was ended; but Rainbow Boy asked for more.

“That cannot be all of your story,” he said, “because I did not find you in the brook. I found you here in the path. Can you not go on and tell me how you came to be so far from the brook?”

“Well,” said Pretty Pebble, “we worked hard and made our sand

bar and many little children came to wade on it and the little calves too that were afraid to follow the cows through the deeper water used to cross on our bar. Oh, we were proud of our work and happy to see how it made others happy. But one day a little child came to wade and a nice old lady came with her to see that she did not get into water that was too deep for her. When the child came to the middle of the brook she saw me and picked me up, crying:

“ ‘Oh, I have found such a pretty pink pebble.’ But when she turned me over she saw that my



"One day a little child came to wade."

other cheek was gray and she carried me to the wise old lady, asking:

"‘Why is there pink on one side and gray on the other?’"

"‘It had to hold on as well as to work,’ said the wise old lady. ‘It is with pebbles as it is with

✦—————✦

little children. To do well they must be true and steady as well as busy, and it is because it has held patiently and firmly to its tasks that your Pretty Pebble has turned to this steadfast and tender gray.'

"'But why did this side turn pink?' asked the child.

"The wise old lady smiled:

"'Your Pretty Pebble turned pink,' she said, 'because it did gladly all the things it had to do, serving sweetly and merrily and making the best of its work.'

"'It is a pretty pink,' said the child.

"'Yes,' said the wise old lady, 'it is a pretty pink, very rosy and

very clear, the color that comes only through cheerfulness.'

" 'It is so beautiful,' said the child, 'may I take it home and put it on a cushion?'

" 'You may,' said the nice old lady, 'but it will not stay beautiful very long on a cushion. Its colors will soon grow cloudy.'

" 'Why?' asked the child.

" 'The reason,' said the wise old lady, 'is because it is with pebbles as it is with everybody else; it takes plenty of work and plenty of play to keep them bright.'

" 'I won't keep it but a little while,' said the child, and she started to carry me home, but her

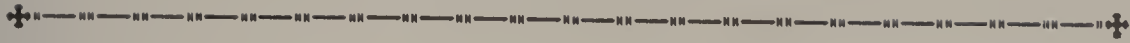


hands were full of many things and when she tripped on that root there, she dropped me without knowing it. I tried and I tried to get back to the brook but it was too far away.”

Rainbow Boy spoke softly:

“It is not so far away. I will take you back to your brook. I too, would like to keep you on a cushion, but I know the wise old lady is right; you would grow dull and listless doing nothing. It is only work that can keep one smooth and bright.”

So he carried Pretty Pebble back to the brook where the little sand bar stretched across



“The first thing I remember, I was lying in the brook.”

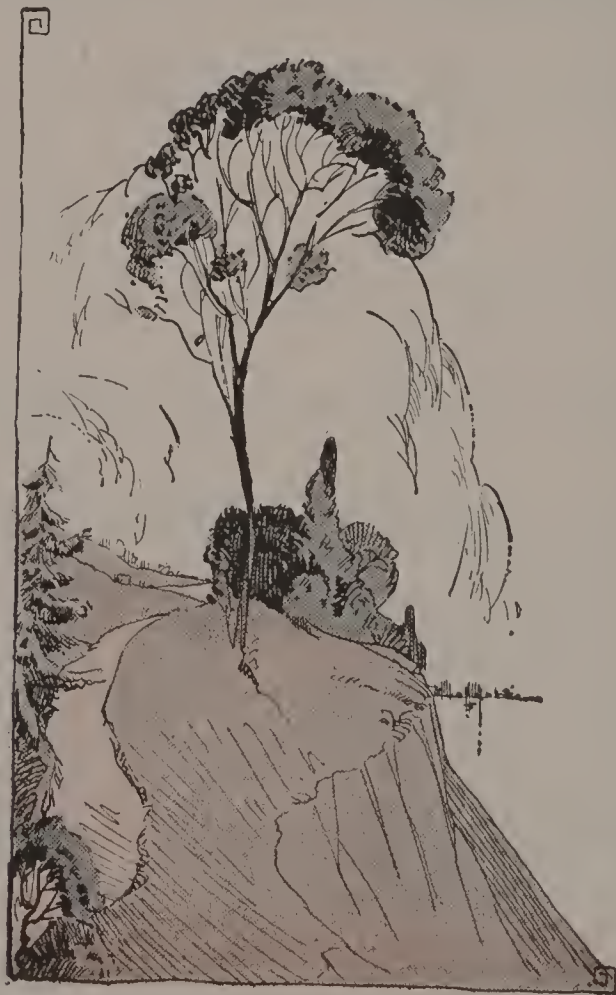
from bank to bank.

“Goodbye, Pretty Pebble,” he said softly, and watched her dive eagerly through the clear water and press her cheek down close to the shining sand.

“I wonder,” Rainbow Boy said to himself, “which side of her is

really the prettier, the one she is good with or the one she is gay with." He thought a moment, then he smiled:

"Oh, yes; I know. It takes them both, the good side and the gay side to make a Pretty Pebble."



WATER HYACINTH

“I am going to see Water-Hyacinth,” Rainbow Boy kept saying to himself as he fought his way through the tangles and thickets of the swamp. “I am going to see Water-Hyacinth. The wise old woman told me I should find Water-Hyacinth growing in the bayou that runs through this swamp and the wise old woman always knows.”

Just as he said that, Rainbow Boy pushed through the last thicket and came out on the bayou bank. True enough, ex-

actly as the wise old woman had said, there was Water-Hyacinth growing in the soft brown water of the bayou.

“She is the most beautiful flower I ever saw,” Rainbow Boy whispered as he stood and looked and looked at the lovely hyacinth colored blossoms that tossed and nodded among their bright green leaves.

“Oh Water-Hyacinth,” he called, “I think you are the loveliest flower I ever saw.”

Instead of looking pleased at what he said, Water-Hyacinth hung her head and began to cry.

“Don’t do that,” Rainbow Boy



"Water-Hyacinth growing in the bayou."

begged, "Oh please, pretty flower, don't do that. Did I say anything to hurt your feelings?"

"No, no," sobbed Water-Hyacinth. "You are always kind and gentle. Of course you did not say anything to hurt my feelings. Let me tell you my story, Rainbow Boy, and then you will understand why I am so sad."

"I should love to hear your story," Rainbow Boy said, "if it will not make you too sad."

Water-Hyacinth smiled sorrowfully:

"It will make me ashamed rather than sad," she said, "but I am going to tell you. It began many

months ago. I was an ugly bulb and I squatted there in the mud so ugly that neither the fish nor the frogs would have anything to do with me. Of course I knew that fish and frogs cared only for things that were good to eat, but I was so lonely that I think I would have been glad to be eaten rather than sit there in the mud all by myself any longer.

“One day while I was moping over my lonely lot a bird flew down to drink near by and asked me if I never had any company. I told the bird that I was too ugly for company.”

“‘You poor thing,’ said the bird,



"A bird flew down to drink near by."

'I am going to send Spirit-of-Change to help you.'

"The bird kept its word and pretty soon Spirit-of-Change came to see if he could help me.

'I can kiss you and change you into something else,' he said,

‘if you will tell me what you want to be.’

“I knew what I wanted to be. I was sick and tired of being ugly and I told the Spirit so.

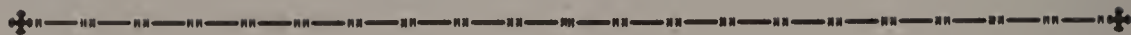
“‘I want to be beautiful,’ I said,
‘I want to be beautiful.’

“ ‘Is that all?’ asked the Spirit, ‘Is beauty all you want?’

“ ‘Yes, yes, yes,’ I said, ‘I want to be beautiful. I am sick of being ugly. If you can make me beautiful please kiss me as quickly as you can.’

“ ‘But think a bit,’ said the Spirit, ‘beautiful people can be as lonesome as ugly ones sometimes.’ ”

“Oh, Rainbow Boy, I didn’t be-



lieve the Spirit when he told me that. I thought he must be mistaken. I didn't see how anyone who was beautiful could ever be lonesome. So I said:

“‘I don't care! I don't care! Make me the most beautiful thing in the swamp and I shall not care how lonesome I am.’

“So Spirit-of-Change kissed me.

“Right away, up from my ugly bulb shot a bunch of green leaves, the brightest, loveliest I ever saw and I thought I was already as beautiful as beautiful could be. But the grass laughed at the idea:

“‘I am just as green as you are,’ it said.



"Make me the most beautiful thing in the swamp."



“The Spirit had promised I should be the loveliest thing in the swamp so I said to the laughing grass:

“‘Just wait till I blossom and then you will see which of us is the more lovely.’

“‘All right,’ said the grass, ‘but hurry up because I am going to have company for dinner and I can’t wait long.’

“The grass did not have to wait long. Right up from the midst of my green leaves sprang a tall slender spike and hanging on all sides of the spike were the loveliest flowers that any eye had ever seen.



“‘I am surprised,’ said the grass, ‘you are indeed beautiful now. Your green leaves and gay flowers make the loveliest bouquet I ever saw. I would like to stay and look at you but I must go spread my table for there’s my company coming now.’

“I looked and saw a flock of sheep coming into the swamp. The grass had the dinner ready and made its company welcome. Very soon the sheep were grazing the tender, juicy blades; the lambs were playing around, the grass was laughing, and they were all having the happiest kind of a time together. It made me feel

lonesome and I thought I would like to have company for dinner too. I called to the sheep and said:

“‘Won’t you come over and feed on me.’

“The sheep sniffed and shook their heads.

“‘You are too beautiful,’ they said. ‘Beautiful things are never good to eat.’

“This made me more lonesome than ever so I called to the birds:

“‘Won’t you come over and build your nest in me?’

“But the birds said:

“‘You are too beautiful. Many people will come to look at you and you will not be a safe place for a nest.’



“And so it was. Everybody that I tried to make friends with said I was too beautiful. And at last I saw how it was. O, Rainbow Boy, haven’t you ever noticed that the loveliest things in the world are always lonesome? Think how beautiful the moon is, but it is all by itself up there in the sky. And the sunset too. With all its loveliness it never has any company for dinner. I know now why Spirit-of-Change wanted me to think a bit before I chose to be beautiful and nothing else but beautiful. He knew I would never have any company.

“Oh, Rainbow Boy, if I could

only have somebody to play with I would be willing and glad to be as homely as that little freckled-faced girl that is picking buttercups with her friends over there on the edge of the swamp."

"Oh, Water - Hyacinth," Rainbow Boy said, "that homely little freckled-faced girl has plenty of friends, because she is nice and polite and doesn't want to play her way all the time. If you were willing to let men cut down your beautiful leaves and blossoms and cure them in the sun until they were withered and gray you would make a fine sweet food for cattle, and you would always have

plenty of company for dinner.”

“Is that so?” said Water-Hyacinth. “Oh, Rainbow Boy, dear Rainbow Boy, please ask the men to come quick and cure my leaves and blossoms for the cows to eat. Ah, it makes me happy, so happy to know I shall have company for dinner. I just cannot tell you how happy I am!”



HURRYING WIND

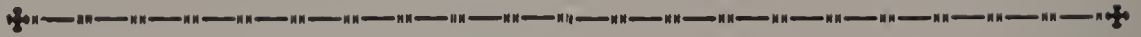
“Wait a moment, Hurrying Wind: I want to hear your story,” called Rainbow Boy, but Hurrying Wind only called over his shoulder, as he hurried on:

“I’m busy. I cannot stop to talk!”

“Then I will go with you, and we can talk as we work.” And away they both went, dusting down the highway in frolic and glee.

“Where do you come from?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“I come from between the



moon and the sea," said Hurrying Wind.

"And where are you going?"

"Wherever I'm sent."

"And what are you doing?"

"Whatever I find to do."

"Tell me about some of the work you have done," asked Rainbow Boy.

"Oh," laughed Hurrying Wind, "It is the same thing over and over. Watch and you will see what"—

But a pod beyond the fence called loudly:

"Oh, Hurrying Wind, help me off with my load."

Rainbow Boy looked and saw



HAROLD ABBOTT MASON

"Hurrying Wind caught up the seeds and scattered them over the field."



that the pod was loaded with seed until it was about to break.

“Poor pod!” he said.

Hurrying Wind laughed, leaped over the fence, caught up the seeds and scattered them over the field. Before the pod could thank him he had gone hurrying on, because a brook at the bottom of the hill was calling:

“There is a stone in my stream that I can’t get over.”

Hurrying Wind ran up behind the whimpering water, gave it a push, and away the ripples went, rolling the stone as it rushed down to the sea. The brook too, would have thanked him; but with a



happy “Ha, ha!” Hurrying Wind had swung himself through a window into a room where a sick girl lay. He swept away the air that had grown warm and stale, pushed the odor of medicine through an open door, and blew a cool breath over the girl’s hot face.

“How nice you are!” whispered the sick girl.

Hurrying Wind did not hear her. He was already out of the room and racing across a pasture to where a herd of cattle fought helplessly against a swarm of flies. They stamped and switched their tails and tossed their heads from



"He swept away the air that had grown warm and stale."

side to side in torment. Hurrying Wind just caught up the swarm of flies and whirled them around until they went spinning into space. The cows lifted up their heads to

him in gratitude, but he could not stop for their thanks.

He had caught sight of a boy who was trying to make a new kite fly. The kite would go up a little way and fall flat. It had done that dozens of times, and the boy was about to give up when Hurrying Wind got there. He picked up the kite and sent it sailing higher and higher until the boy could hardly see it—way up in the sky.

“Hurrah for you, Mr. Wind,” the boy cheered. But Hurrying Wind could not wait to be thanked, for some little children in an orchard were calling him to come shake the plum trees.



“‘Hurrah for you, Mr. Wind!’ the boy cheered.”

And such fun as it was!—Hurrying Wind shaking the trees until the red and yellow plums came down like rain, the children filling their pockets and aprons, everybody laughing. Rainbow Boy laughed, too.

“Oh, Hurrying Wind,” he said, “what a happy life is yours!”

“Oh, well,” said Hurrying Wind, “we are all of us happy when we are helping. But there are days when I do more harm than good, and then I am no happier than you are when you have a useless spell on you. And I’ll tell you”—

But just then a pine tree bent done and whispered:

“A sad heart is aching. Come harp among my needles until the poor, sorrowful soul is soothed.”

And, as Rainbow Boy stood bare-headed in the grass, he heard the hand of Hurrying Wind, tender and kind, harping softly high up in the tree.





"Everybody got up early and went to market."

GOOD WISH

Rainbow Boy had been told that in this southern city everybody got up early and went to market before breakfast so he asked his

knew and pretty soon he caught sight of a kind-looking fellow he had often seen in crowds.

“That’s Good Wish,” he cried, “I know he will go with me to market.”

Good Wish heard what Rainbow Boy said and waited for him to catch up.

“Are you going to French Market?” he asked.

“Yes,” Rainbow Boy replied. “This is the first time I have ever started for there.”

“It is a great place,” said Good Wish. “You can buy anything from a cup of coffee to a crab. I hope you will have a good time.”



“Thank you,” Rainbow Boy said politely. “I am very glad you waited for me.”

“It was nice of you to catch up with me,” said Good Wish. “It is jolly to talk as you walk along.”

The mocking birds were singing in the palm gardens and all the world seemed so bright, clean and new that Rainbow Boy felt it was just the time to hear a story. He walked closer to Good Wish and asked:

“Was your name always Good Wish?”

“Why, no: it wasn’t. I once had such an ugly name that I do not like to think about it.

“What was your ugly name,” asked Rainbow Boy.

“It was Moping Mind, that’s what it was. And I must say that I was just as ugly as my name was. I never had a kind thought for anybody. I never had a happy hope. I sat around scowling, and put in all my time thinking about my ill fortune. When I came to the end of it I’d begin and think it all over again. If anybody tried to cheer me up, I’d get sullen and sulk. I tell you, Rainbow Boy, you cannot find anything anywhere much uglier than a Moping Mind.”

“How did you come to change your name?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“The boy I belonged to made me change it. That’s the reason! It was a bright, new morning just like this. The boy took hold of me and gave me a shake and said.

“‘I’m sick of you. Go and lose yourself! I won’t have a Moping Mind around me a minute longer.’

“I became scared then, of course, because I knew that if the boy drove me away I would have to go where the candle-light went when it went out and I did not want to go there. I began to cry and begged the boy to let me stay.

“‘You can stay if you behave yourself,’ he said. ‘You will have to stop your silly sulking. You will

have to stop thinking about your ill fortune.'

" 'How can I do that?' I asked. 'I must think about something and ill fortune is all I have.'

" 'Well, if you haven't any good fortune of your own to think about, the boy said, 'you can think about other people's good fortune.'

"I didn't want to do that. I didn't want to think about good fortune at all. So I told the boy I didn't see how I COULD think about other people's good fortune.

" 'I see how you can do it,' the boy said, 'and I know how you are going to do it. Everytime you meet anybody, I know you are going to take your hat off and say:

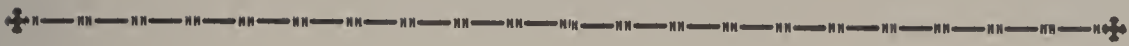


“ ‘Good-day, I wish you well.’ ”

“Did you do it?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“I had to. That boy was in earnest. He wasn’t going to put up with a Moping Mind a minute longer. But I must say, Rainbow Boy, it was strangely hard to do. My tongue was like a stick in my mouth. My lips stuck together. It just seemed as if I couldn’t smile. But that boy whipped me up to it.

“ ‘Say it,’ he’d tell me when we met a person he knew. ‘Say Good-day, I wish you well. If you don’t say it, I’ll send you where the candle-light went to when it went out.’ ”



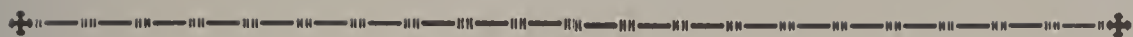
“So I’d stretch my lips till they grinned and I would limber up my tongue and give somebody a good wish.”

“But it became easier after a little while, didn’t it?” asked Rainbow Boy. “I know it is that way with me. It may be real hard to do right the first time, but the next time I have to do it I find it much easier.”

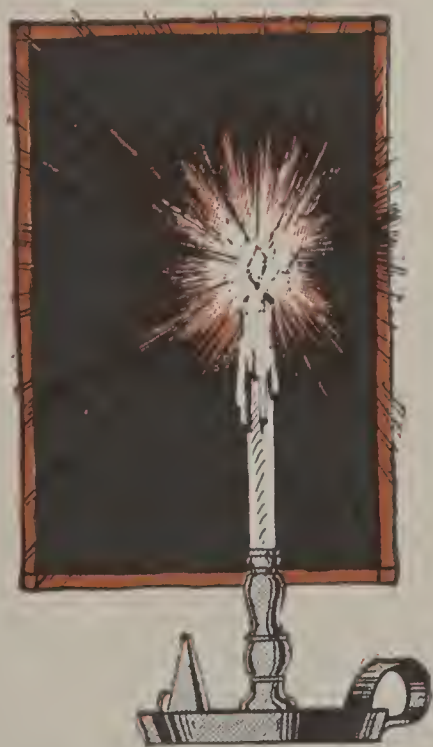
“Yes,” said Good Wish, “it was easier the next time and it kept on getting easier and easier till it became so I just loved to give good wishes and I was always on the look out for a chance to say:

“‘Good-day, I wish you well.’”

“After awhile I think even the boy forgot that I had ever been a Moping Mind. Everybody began to call me Good Wish and to be very friendly and kind. Well, here we are at the French Market! I must be getting busy because there is not a single heart in this big crowd that is not hungry for a good wish. They can buy almost anything in the French Market except a good wish. Did you ever think about that, Rainbow Boy? There isn’t a market in the world where good wishes can be bought. A good wish must always be given, so—Good-day, Rainbow Boy, I wish you well.”



“Good-day, you dear kind fellow,” cried Rainbow Boy, “and I wish you well with all my heart. Indeed I do. I wish you very, very well, Good Wish.”



CANDLE LIGHT

When Rainbow Boy saw Candle Light in his room he went in quickly, for he had long wanted to hear her story.

“Please,” he said pleasantly, “please, Candle Light, tell me where you came from to-night.”

“I didn’t just come to-night,” Candle Light said gently; “I have been a long time coming.”

“Tell me about it,” begged Rainbow Boy.

“All right, but I can tell you only what I remember. First I was grass, but there was earth, air, and

water in me, so of course Spirit-of-Change did not let me stay grass very long. He brought a cow to bite me off. She bit me and chewed me and swallowed me, then chewed me and swallowed me again, so that pretty soon I turned to fat and lay snug and warm between the lean meat and the hide. I fitted the place so nicely that I thought I must be there to stay. But it seemed earth, air, and water were in me yet, so before long I had to change again.

“A butcher came and killed the cow, took off her hide, and stripped me from my cozy place. They cut me into bits and put me



HAROLD ABBOTT MASON

"They cut me into bits and put me in a pot over a fire."

“I asked how that could be because this was the first Match I had seen, and it was little and red-headed and really didn’t look as if it could do much. But it kept on saying that it could.

“ ‘Why, when I see something I want to change,’ said the Match, ‘all I have to do is to snap and touch it and it changes.’ ”

“There was a piece of white paper lying alongside the Match, so I asked:

“‘Can you change that piece of paper?’

“ ‘Why, surely I can,’ the Match cried; ‘Just watch what I do.’ ”

“The Match snapped and



touched the paper, and at once it became a blaze. I was so surprised that I sat staring until the blaze itself changed to ashes. Then I asked:

“‘Can you change the ashes?’

“But the Match itself had changed and become a little charred stick.

“‘No, no,’ it said. ‘A Match can snap and touch but once. I could have changed a great house to ashes as easily as I changed that piece of paper, but I have thrown away my power, to prove a vain boast, and now I shall die.’

“It did die, too, I know, because soon after a hand picked it up



and tossed it into a tray, and a voice said:

“‘Don’t bother. That match is dead.’

“After I had met the Match I began to get restless. So long as I had believed myself to be fixed for life as tallow, I was well enough satisfied; but after what the match had said, and after the way I had seen a plain piece of paper changed to a burning blaze, I began to wish I could change too, and I made up my mind that the next time I met a Match, I would ask it to snap and touch me.

“I did not know it then, but there were going to be a good

many things done to me before I met another Match. I was packed in a box and hauled around and unpacked and wrapped into a bundle—Oh, ever so many things! But at last hands brought me into this room, and set me in a candlestick. I looked around, and the first thing I saw was a Match. When I saw the Match I said immediately:

“‘Oh, please, please snap and touch me.’

“The match was red-headed, and as ready to laugh as most jolly red-headed people are. It laughed and said:

“ ‘Why are you in such a hurry to have a match touched to you?’

“I said:

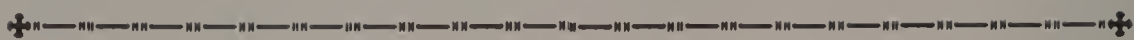
“ ‘Please touch me. I want to see if I won’t become a blaze.’

“ ‘Become a blaze,’ he laughed. ‘Why, what do you think you are? A piece of kindling wood?’

“ ‘No,’ I said. ‘I know I am only a piece of tallow.’

“ ‘A piece of tallow!’ the Match laughed, but so nicely. ‘Why, you are a candle, and if I touch you, you will become one of the dearest, softest little daughters great Light has on earth.’ That is what the Match said, Rainbow Boy.”

“I know,” said Rainbow Boy.



“And it all came true. The Match snapped and touched you, and you became Candle Light—one of the softest, dearest, little lights that ever shone. I wish you would shine on forever.”

Candle Light smiled happily.

“But of course I can’t do that,” she said, “because all Candle Lights must go out.”

“Where do they go when they go out?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“That is what nobody knows,” said Candle Light, gently. “You see thousands and thousands of Candle Lights have gone out, but not one has ever come back to tell where it went to.”



"Thousands and thousands of candle lights have gone out."

Just as she said this, Candle Light flickered and went out softly, and Rainbow Boy was left alone in the dark.

WAYSIDE WEED

Wayside Weed nodded gayly to Rainbow Boy, and he gladly stopped to say a pleasant word for he enjoyed talking to cheerful people.

“You appear to be having a jolly time here,” he said, “even if you are a bit dusty.”

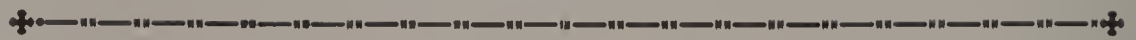
Wayside Weed laughed merrily:

“Oh, I daresay I am dusty enough, but, then, I like to watch the people go by, and you can’t have passing crowds without some dust. If you had lived all your life on the side of a road as I have,

you would know that things always come mixed, the pleasant with the unpleasant."

“One doesn’t have to live on the side of a road to learn that,” Rainbow Boy answered. “I have lived in a number of places, and I have always found it the same way. Pleasure and pain come along together; and if you take more than your share of pleasure, you will have to take more pain than you care to have.”

“Well,” said Wayside Weed, cheerfully, “of course I don’t know very much about it, but I noticed a good while ago that to get something you want you have to take



along with it something you don't want. So I take the dust as it comes, and merrily remember that by and by the dew and the rain will come and wash me clean. Then I feel that it is very nice to be here."

"Yes," said Rainbow Boy; but he thought to himself that it did look very nice there where Wayside Weed was growing. The ground was bare and so sun-baked that it was a wonder she could grow at all; the dust from the road had powdered her leaves to a grayish green.

"How can she breathe?" wondered Rainbow Boy.

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For neighbors she had only some grass burrs.

“How do you get on with the burrs?” he asked. “Are they friendly?”

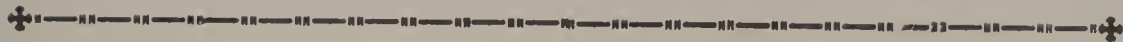
“Oh, they are very pleasant people if you let them alone. I’ve been told that they stick those who go prying into their plot, but I do not know that it is true. I never leave my own plot. Whenever I nod across to them, they always nod back to me. I find them very nice neighbors.”

“People who stay at home generally do get on well with their neighbors,” said Rainbow Boy. “I have heard that said often. See

here, Wayside Weed, I like your cheerful way of looking at things. I wish you would tell me your story.”

Wayside Weed nodded and laughed:

“Why, I haven’t any story worth telling. Wind was playing over there in the meadow one day when I was a little seed. He snatched me out of my mother’s lap and ran away with me. He lifted me high and carried me lightly for a while, but, by the time he got here, he was tired and let me fall. I was glad he dropped me when he did. If he had carried me a little farther, I should have fallen into the

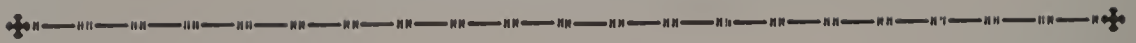


"Of course I had wanted to grow in a garden."

wheel track and been ground to powder. I could never have come up."

"And, when you did come up and look around you, did you like the place?"

"Well, no, not all at once, I didn't. Of course, I had wanted to grow in a garden where I would be petted and made to bloom prettily. I thought if I had only



been planted in a garden, I would have been as beautiful as the roses you see blooming over there.

“I drooped to think I was only a Wayside Weed, and I believe I should have pined myself into a sickly thing if that glad fellow, Light, had not come singing along and advised me to make the best of it. He said:

“‘My day’s work carries me all over the world, and I have to shine on some very sad and some very sorrowful things. If I had not learned to make the best of it, I would have become gray as gloom long ago.’

“Well, I thought, if even a glad



"My day's work carries me all over the world."

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fellow like Light, has to make the best of things, surely I can do it, too. And you know how it is!

When you begin to make the best of things, you are surprised to find how much best there is to be made. I shook the dust from my leaves and lifted my head to the dew. When Light came back in the morning, I gave him all my drops to flash through. My tiny little flowers were not to be thought of with the bright, beautiful roses, but they were pale and pretty, and, when Light kissed them, they looked so happy that a man and a woman who were riding by stopped and smiled.

“ ‘Only a Wayside Weed,’ said the lady, ‘but how very pretty! I should think it would take courage to keep one’s self clean and sweet in a place like this.’

“The man leaned down from his saddle to answer her.

“ ‘It takes courage to keep one’s self clean and sweet in any place, dear,’ he said. And then they rode on.

“I told Light about it. I told him I would like to keep myself clean and sweet all the time; but how could I when the dust was so thick in the middle of the day? I thought my case a rather hard one, but Light only laughed.

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“‘You can always keep yourself clean and sweet if you make the best of things,’ he said.”

Wayside Weed looked up merrily.

“I have been trying ever since to do as Light said, but I don’t look very clean and sweet just now, do I?”

“You look all right,” Rainbow Boy told her, happily. “Your soul is clean and sweet even if your leaves are a bit dusty. Oh, I wish there were more cheerful people in the world like you, Wayside Weed!”

DARK PLACE

Nearly everybody stops when he comes to Dark Place, and Rainbow Boy stopped, too. As he did so, he thought he heard a sigh. He listened a minute and was sure he heard the sigh again. So he asked:

“What is the matter, Dark Place? Are you unhappy?”

“Unhappy,” said Dark Place. “Oh, I am dismal.”

Rainbow Boy was always tender to anyone who was unhappy, so he came close and spoke softly:

“Why are you so unhappy?” he asked.



“Nobody likes me. That glad person, Light, will not have a thing to do with me. And little children fear me as though I were as wicked as a lie.” She began to sob, and Rainbow Boy felt sorrowful, for he knew that what she said was true. All gladness and brightness kept away from Dark Place as though she were a bad thing and yet she did no harm to anyone. It was not her fault that she was dark.

“Don’t cry,” he said, “it doesn’t seem fair that you should be treated so. Of course it must be fair—everything is fair if we could only understand how things come

to be. Let's go over it all together. It is true that Light never comes near you, but then you have Shadow always with you. Some people—a great many people—think Shadow a more gentle friend than Light.”

“People with sick eyes like him, Dark Place said unhappily, “but the well and the strong, love Light.”

Rainbow Boy shook his head.

“Dark Place,” he said kindly, “don't you know we would all be happier if we loved the friend we have while we have him? As it is, we go around criticising, and finding fault with him for this and

finding fault with him for that, and it is not until our friend dies or goes away that we find out how dear he is and wish we had loved him more while he was with us—but then it is all too late.”

Dark Place could not be comforted:

“If Shadow is so fine a friend,” she sobbed, “why do little children fear him so?”

“Children don’t fear Shadow,” Rainbow Boy said, “they like to play with him.”

“They play with him when he is with Light, but they are afraid of him when he is with me. If their mother sends a child to



"They like to play with him."

Shadow when he is with me the child begins to beg somebody to go with it, or it begins to cry." And Dark Place began to sob again. "Oh, I know it isn't Shadow they fear. It is I whom the little children fear. Why should little children be afraid of me?"

"Don't cry," Rainbow Boy said kindly. "Don't cry. Children are

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afraid of you because they don't know you. Some children are afraid of all strangers. But think how many living things there are who are not afraid of you. A little mouse told me once that whenever he got hold of a piece of cheese or a bit of bread he always ran to eat it with you. He said he would rather have you at his tea party than anybody else in the world. He loved you so."

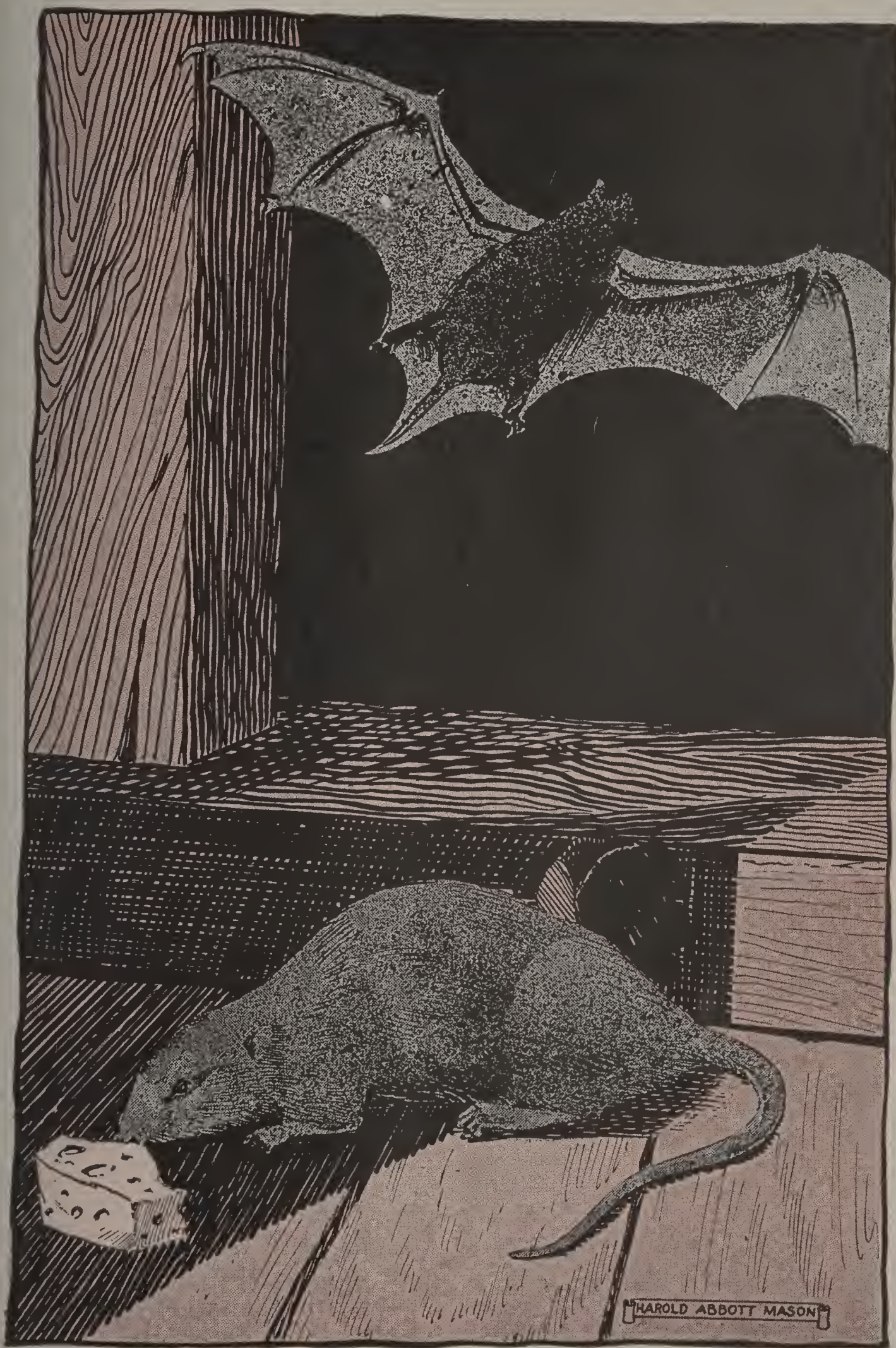
"Oh, yes," Dark Place sighed, "the mice love me."

"And toads, too. It was only yesterday that a little toad was telling me how you saved his life. He was hopping along when some



boys saw him and began to call: 'Catch him! Catch him!' and to strike at him with sticks. At first he was so scared he did not know what to do. Then he remembered that you were his friend and began hopping toward you as fast as he could. The boys chased him hard, broke one of his legs, battered his body and bruised his head.

You see, he was only one little toad against them all, and he had just about given himself up to be killed when he caught sight of you waiting to save him. He made a long jump and you caught him and hid him among your shades. He says you mended his leg and



HAROLD ABBOTT MASON

"And the bats, too."

healed his bruises and kept him safely until he was well and strong. Poor little fellow, he told me you were the only friend he had in the world."

"Oh, yes," said Dark Place, "the toads love me."

"And the bats, too," Rainbow Boy said quickly, for Dark Place spoke so sorrowfully. "A big, strong bat once told me that he would never be able to live through the day if it were not for your kindness in giving him darkness."

But for all Rainbow Boy might say, Dark Place only sighed unhappily.



“I know,” she said, “bats and mice and toads love me and come to me to be comforted, but little children are afraid of me and it almost breaks my heart to think about it. You know, Rainbow Boy, how I love little children, how I long to soothe them to sleep when they are tired. I wouldn’t hurt one of them for the world. But they are afraid of me.”

Dark Place began to sob again when she had said that, and Rainbow Boy could only stand by feeling very sorry for her. He could not think of anything to say.

It was true. Many children were afraid of Dark Place. He won-



"How I love little children."

dered why this should be so. For surely she who sheltered all the little timid creatures of the earth would never hurt a little child.



BEAUTIFUL BUBBLES

Rainbow Boy tipped his head back to look at the bubble a little chap had just blown from his pipe.

“Oh, beautiful bubble,” he cried, “what are you thinking of, sailing along so softly up there in the air?”

“I am thinking of what I am going to do next.”

“And what is it you are going to do?”

“I am going to burst.”

“Burst! Must you do that? You are so beautiful just as you are.

“Oh yes, I must burst. You see I am made up of earth, air and



water, so I know Spirit-of-Change will come to me pretty soon. For we know, Rainbow Boy, Spirit-of-Change comes to everything that is made up of earth, air and water.”

“But there isn’t any earth in you, surely you are only air and water.”

“And soap. Do you think I could float so steadily if I had no soap? And the strong part of soap comes from the earth.”

“Oh, yes. I had forgotten about the mineral part of soap. But there is very little of that.”

“There is enough of it to bring Spirit-of-Change my way. And, here he comes now.”

Even as she spoke, Rainbow Boy saw Spirit-of-Change come stealing softly upon Beautiful Bubble. He spun her wall round swiftly, softened her bright colors to a misty gray and she burst.

“Why did you do it?” Rainbow Boy cried. “Why did you make her burst when she was so beautiful?”

Spirit - of - Change demanded sternly:

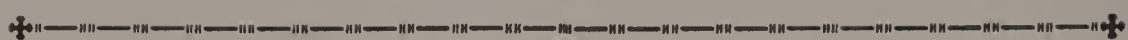
“Don’t you know that all Bubbles must burst? To be blown, to float and to burst; this is the law of the life of Bubbles.”

“But why? They are beautiful



and they do no harm in the world. Why must they burst?"

"Bubbles burst because they do no good in the world," Spirit-of-Change replied. "They sow no seed to feed Life or to clothe her. So Life sends me about to burst them. Then their water is freed to form in dew upon living things; their air is sent to help the wind; their earth goes back to the ground to help make things grow. When you have lived longer, Rainbow Boy, and gone about more you will not need to be told that sooner or later all idleness must make an end. Either it destroys itself or Life sends me to destroy it."



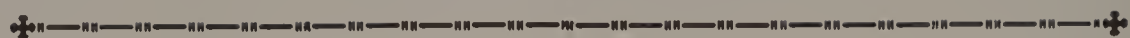
“But if Life means to destroy it why does she let idleness be? Why does she let Beautiful Bubbles be blown if she means to send you to burst them?”

“Why how curious you are! Can’t you see that Life lets Beautiful Bubbles be blown because the blowing was good work for the little chap? It taught him to blow gently and to keep his lips steady. Also it taught him to be careful and patient about what he did.

“But after she was blown there was nothing more for the little chap to learn from her. Indeed, as long as she was floating around



"Sooner or later all idleness must make an end."



in the air the little chap did nothing but stand staring after her. That is idleness, you see. I burst Beautiful Bubbles and the little chap blows another. Life is well satisfied, but you begin to abuse me for obeying the law."

"I did not understand," said Rainbow Boy, "but I see now. You change things that they may become more useful."

"That is it exactly," said Spirit-of-Change, "and after you have watched me work for a while you will see that I let the useful things alone for long years at a time. And that I put an end to the useless ones in a hurry."



But Rainbow Boy was thinking of something else.

“Tell me,” he said, “do you think Beautiful Bubble was happier after she burst than she was before?”

“Of course,” answered Spirit-of-Change, “all Bubbles are happier after they burst. Aren’t you always happier when you stop doing nothing and start to work?”



SUNNY SMILE

Rainbow Boy was sitting on a stone and feeling as sick and sorry as if he had been to a party the night before and eaten a big piece of cake that was too rich for him.

“I know I ought to be happy,” he said to himself. “God made us all to be happy and we ought to try to be that way—but it is rather hard to be happy sometimes.”

Just then a little girl came dancing along, and as soon as he caught sight of her, Rainbow Boy began to feel a great deal better. He called to her and begged her



"A little girl came dancing along."



to wait a minute.

“Please,” he said, “Oh, please don’t go by so fast; it makes me feel so good to see you. Can’t you stay with me for a little while?”

The little girl came and sat down on the stone.

“Are you feeling very bad?” she asked.

“I was feeling bad before you came along, but I don’t feel so bad now. In fact,” said Rainbow Boy, “I stopped feeling bad and began to feel happy just as soon as I saw you. Won’t you tell me what your name is?”

The little girl put her hands together and looked away, laughing



"Won't you tell me what your name is?"

softly to herself.

“I have a strange kind of name,” she said.

“What is it?” asked Rainbow Boy.

“Well — they call me Sunny Smile.”

“Oh,” said Rainbow Boy, “no wonder I felt so much better the minute I saw you. I have always heard that it made everybody feel better just to see Sunny Smile. Tell me, little sweetheart, do you like being a Sunny Smile?”

“Yes,” the little girl said. “Yes, I like it because everybody I meet is so nice to me.”



“That is because you are so nice to everybody you meet,” Rainbow Boy told her. “When you come to people, looking so bright and sweet, they just can’t help loving you. Won’t you tell me your story?”

“I haven’t any story to tell,” Sunny Smile said. “I’ve never done anything but just go around smiling.”

“But that is a fine thing to do, sweetheart. People who just go around smiling make everybody feel a whole lot better and a whole lot happier. Tell me—did Spirit-of-Change ever kiss you?”

“He hasn’t kissed me yet. He says he is going to kiss me some



"Make everybody feel a whole lot better."



day and give me a new name. But, oh, Rainbow Boy, I am afraid. I don't want that new name. It is too big."

"What did he say your new name would be, little one?"

"He said it would be either Inspiration or Benediction — but that's too big for me."

Rainbow Boy caught Sunny Smile's hands and held them tight.

"Oh, no, it is not too big for you, sweetheart. You are an inspiration and a benediction already. You are a blessing and a joy and a healer of hurts. You are the dearest little fairy that ever rested on anybody's lips. Oh, if

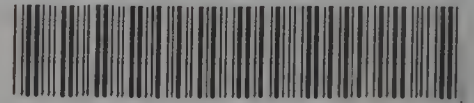
all the little girls I know were to turn into Sunny Smiles, how we should enjoy them and what a happy, happy place this world would be!”







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